

THE
CHAPTER of ACCIDENTS:

A
C O M E D Y,
IN
FIVE ACTS.

PRICE ONE SHILLING and SIX-PENCE.

CHAPTER OF ACCORDANCE

G. H. D. D. M. O. D.



THE
Chapter of Accidents:

A
COMEDY,
IN
FIVE ACTS,

As it is performed at all the

THEATRES - ROYAL

IN
LONDON.

WRITTEN by Miss LEE.

THE FOURTH EDITION.

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MDCCLXXXII.



P R E F A C E.

TH E aversion a woman ought to feel at the necessity of engaging even in a literary contest, has induced me to endure a variety of imputations; yet, to publish a piece, and leave all unanswered, might at once give a sanction to the past, and encourage future slanders:—let this plead my excuse for introducing myself to those who have so generously received a comedy I could wish more worthy their patronage.

Charged early in life with the care of a family, I accompanied my father eight years ago in the rules of a prison, where the perjury of an enemy and the injustice of a judge for a time confined him. To amuse some of my melancholy leisure, I there (from a fondness for Marmontel's beautiful tale of Lauretta) first conceived a design of introducing into the Drama a female heart, capable of frailty, yet shuddering at vice, and perhaps sufficiently punished in her own feelings. A lover, whose error was likewise in his heart, not head; and even for him I contrived a chastisement in the agony of losing her: nor did I imagine, in adopting a religious tenet, I could ever be accused of offending morality. Subsequent characters and incidents arose in the manner they now appear, except that the governor had then no place in it. It is now seven years since the piece was brought thus forward; soon after which a friend lent me a translation of Monsieur Diderot's *Pere de Famille*.—This fine performance gave me infinite pleasure under all the disadvantages of a translation; and the chance-similitude which now and then occurred between that and mine rather flattered

than grieved me, since, conscious of my own originality, and imagining even my worst enemy, if he charged me with plagiarism, would at least allow, while the subject was new to our stage, my only crime was in denying it.—I returned the translated play, and mine lay dormant several years. Sentiment was now exploded, and I therefore sought to diversify it with humour. The character of the austere Commander in Monsieur Diderot's play had particularly pleased me; and not being mistress of the French language, I sought in vain for a translation, on purposed to interweave him into mine. Not able to meet with any, I created the character of Governor Harcourt, (whose chief likeness to the French uncle is in name) and heightened the piece with every event relative to him: but an unbounded partiality I must ever retain for music made me finish it as a three act opera.

In the interim my father had been engaged as a capital Actor by Mr. Harris. Life opened gradually upon me, and dissipated the illusions of imagination. I learnt that merit merely is a very insufficient recommendation to managers in general! and as I had neither a prostituted pen or person to offer Mr. Harris, I gave up, without a trial, all thoughts of the Drama, and sought an humble home in Bath, resolving to bury in my own heart its little talent, and be a poor any thing rather than a poor author. Some valuable friends, I had long possessed there, insisted I should be wanting to myself in consigning this piece voluntarily to oblivion, and offered me a recommendation to Mr. Harris, with a promise of concealing my name, unless it was accepted. I could desire nothing more: and under these circumstances it was put into that gentleman's hands above a twelvemonth ago. The praises he gave it induced my friend to own my name, and from that moment (let his
conscience

conscience tell him why) it sunk in Mr. Harris's favour. He said he had frequently refused a play of Mr. Macklin's taken from *le Pere de Famille*, and could not accept another on the same subject; insisted that the serious part of mine was all Diderot's; advised me to cut it entirely out, and convert the humorous part into an after-piece, which he would bring out in the course of the season. Reasons very remote from the Stage could alone induce me to listen a moment to his proposal, and those brought me a hundred miles to converse with him on the subject; when he produced me the copy sent him, so worn out and dirty, that I had reason to conclude he had lent it to every one he knew, at least.—I was enough mistress of myself to listen with complaisance to the most supercilious and unmeaning criticisms, and agreed to mutilate it according to his ideas. The Actors were now named; I had every reason to imagine it a settled thing; and returning to Bath, sent the reduced copy at the appointed time, viz. early in September. A month elapsed without my even knowing he had received it; when, with the continued ill manners of addressing me by a third person, (for he never wrote a single line in answer to several letters) I was shewn a paragraph from Mr. Harris by the friend already mentioned, importing, that I “had sent him *four* acts instead of *two*, and must still take away half; adding, that he advised me by all means to retain my own, disregarding Diderot's.” I did retain my own; for as the manuscript was luckily returned for another alteration, I thought it time to consider what was due to myself, and that the character of mildness and complacency would be rather dearly bought if I gave up all merit for it; I therefore wrote him a civil letter, and finally withdrew it.

I shall not expatiate on this treatment. I was perhaps in some degree blameable, for believing that man would set any value on my time or my money, who knew not the value of his own; nay, I may be in reality obliged to him in one sense, since his acceptance of my Comedy would inevitably have consigned to oblivion those parts of it honored with the most lavish applause.

What pleasure do I feel in retracting the general aspersions cast upon managers, when I speak of Mr. Colman!—Obliged to get the piece represented if possible, lest the subject should be borrowed (an evil too common of late) I enclosed with it an anonymous letter to that Gentleman, briefly relating these particulars, and it was left at his house early in the year by an unknown person. At the expiration of a fortnight the manuscript or his answer was demanded, and the latter by this means rendered both impartial and decisive. Mr. Colman thought the general name of Author entitled to the compliment of his own hand-writing; and, by a flattering opinion, and immediate acceptance of my piece, encouraged me to avow myself. By his advice I cut out the songs, and lengthened it into five acts. Nor did his kindness end there. He gave me the benefit of his judgment and experience, both in heightening and abbreviating the business, with every attention in casting and getting it up; generously uniting to the name of Manager that of Friend, Mr. Colman has brought into notice a woman who will ever with pride and pleasure acknowledge the obligation.

P R O L O G U E.

Written by GEORGE COLMAN, *Esq.*

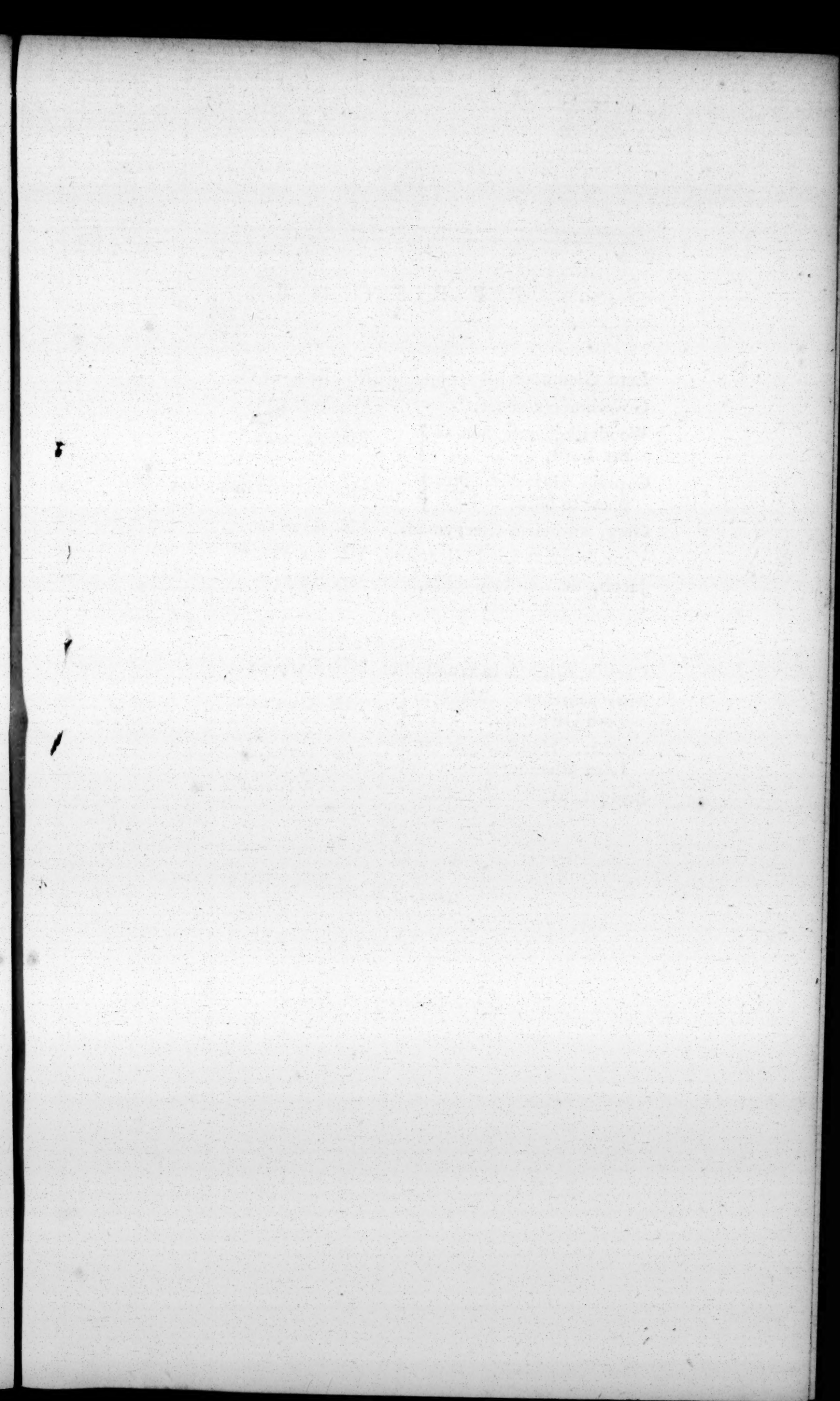
Spoken by Mr. PALMER.

LONG has the passive stage, howe'er absurd,
 Been rul'd by *names*, and govern'd by a *word*.
 Some poor *cant term*, like magic spells can awe,
 And bind our realms, like a dramatic law.
 When Fielding, Humour's fav'rite child, appear'd,
Low was the word—a word each author fear'd!
 'Till chac'd at length, by pleasantry's bright ray,
 Nature and mirth resum'd their legal sway;
 And Goldsmith's genius bask'd in open day.

No beggar, howe'er poor, a cur can lack;
 Poor bards, of critic curs can keep a *pack*.
 One yelper silenc'd, twenty barkers rise,
 And with new *howls*, their *snarlings* still disguise.
Low banish'd, the word *sentiment* succeeds;
 And at that shrine the modern playwright bleeds.
 Hard fate! but let each wou'd-be critic know,
 That *sentiments* from genuine *feelings* flow,
 Critics in vain disclaim, and write, and rail:
 Nature, eternal Nature! will prevail.
 Give me the bard, who makes me laugh and cry,
 Diverts and moves, and all, I scarce know why!
 Untaught by commentators, French and Dutch,
 Passion still answers to th' electric touch.
 Reason, like Falstaff, claims, when all is done,
 The honors of the field already won.

To-

To-night, our author's is a mix'd intent—
Passion and humour—*low* and *sentiment* ;
Smiling in tears—a serio-comic play—
Sunshine and show'r---a kind of April-Day!
A Lord, whose pride is in his honor plac'd ;
A governor with av'rice not disgrac'd ;
An humble priest ! a lady, and a lover,
So full of virtue, *some of it runs over*.
No temporary touches, no allusions
To camps, reviews, and all our late confusions ;
No personal reflections, no sharp satire,
But a mere chapter from the book of Nature.
Wrote by a woman too ! the muses now
Few liberties to naughty men allow ;
But like old maids on earth, resolv'd to vex,
With cruel coyness treat the other sex.



P E R S O N S.

Lord Glenmore, - - - - Mr. BENSLEY.
 Governor Harcourt, - - - Mr. WILSON.
 Woodville, only Son to }
 my Lord, - - - } - Mr. PALMER.
 Captain Harcourt, Ne- }
 pew to both, - } - Mr. BANNISTER, Jun.
 Grey, an infirm Clergyman, Mr. AICKIN.
 Vane, Valet to Lord Glenmore, Mr. LA MASH.
 Jacob, Servant to Cecilia, - Mr. EDWIN.

Cecilia, Mistress to Woodville, Miss FARREN.
 Miss Mortimer, Ward to }
 Lord Glenmore, - } - Mrs. CUYLER.
 Warner, Housekeeper to }
 Lord Glenmore, - } - Mrs. LOVE.
 Bridget, Maid to Cecilia, - Mrs. WILSON.

Scene, London.

Time, twenty-four Hours.

T H E

T H E

CHAPTER of ACCIDENTS:

A

C O M E D Y.

SCENE I. *A Hall.*

Enter Vane in a Riding Dress, and a Footman.

Vane. **R**UN, and tell Mrs. Warner, my Lord is at hand; and bid the butler send me a bottle of hock. *(Throws himself along the hall chairs, wiping his forehead)* Phew! the months have jumbled out of their places, and we have July in September.

Enter Mrs. Warner.

War. Servant, Mr. Vane.

Vane. Ah, my dear creature! how have you done these fifty ages?

B

War.

War. Why, methinks you are grown mighty grand, or you would have come to the still-room to ask; will you chuse any chocolate?

Vane. Why don't you see I am dead?---absolutely dead; and, if you was to touch me, I should shake to meer dust, like an Egyptian mummy. Because it was not provoking enough to lounge away a whole summer in the country, here am I driven up to town, as if the devil was at my heels in the shape of our hopeful heir; who has neither suffered my Lord nor me to rest one moment, through his confounded impatience to see his uncle.

War. Umph,---he'll have enough of the old gentleman presently. He is the very moral of my poor dear lady, his sister, who never was at peace herself, nor suffered any one else to be so. Such a house as we have had ever since he came!---why he is more full of importance and airs than a bailiff in possession; and hectors over Miss Mortimer, 'till she almost keeps her chamber to avoid him.

Vane. Hates Miss Mortimer!---why, here 'll be the devil to pay about her, I suppose?

War. Hate her? ay, that he does. He look'd as if he could have kill'd her, the moment she came down to see him; and got into his chamber presently after, where he sends for me,---"Who is this young woman, Mrs. What's your name?" says he. Why, fir, says I, she is the orphan of a Colonel Mortimer, whose intimacy with my Lord, says I---"Pho, pho, says he, all that I know, woman; what does she do in this house?" says he; his face wrinkling all over,
like

like cream, when it's skimming. Why, sir, says I, her father unluckily died, just before the Duke his brother, and so could not leave her one shilling of all that fine fortune; so my Lord intends to marry her to Mr. Woodville, says I.—“He does?” cries he; heav’n be prais’d I’m come in time to mar that dainty project, however. You may go, woman, and tell Miss, I don’t want any thing more to-night.”—So up goes I to Miss Mortimer, and tells her all this. Lord! how glad she was, to find he intended to break the match, though she can’t guess what he means.

Vane. Upon my soul, I think it is full as hard to guess what she means. What the devil, will not my Lord’s title, fortune, and only son, be a great catch for a girl without a friend or a shilling?

War. Ay; but I could tell you a little story, would explain all.—You must know—(*sitting down; a loud knocking.*)

Vane. (*starts up.*) Zounds, here’s my Lord!

[*Exeunt confusedly.*]

SCENE, *An Antickamber.*

Lord Glenmore and the Governor meet; the latter hobbling.

L. Glen. You are welcome to England, brother! I am sorry your native air pays you so ill a compliment after sixteen years absence.

Gov. Faith, my Lord, and so am I too, I promise you: I put up with these things tolerably well in the Indies; I did not go there to be happy; but,

after all my labours, to find I have just got the money when it is out of my power to enjoy it, is a cursed stroke:---like a fine ship of war, I am only come home to be dismasted and converted into an hospital. However, I am glad *you* hold it better: I don't think you look'd as well when we parted. My sister, poor Susan! she is gone too:---well, we can never live a day the longer for thinking on't. Where's Frank? is he still the image of his mother?

L. Glen. Just as you left him, but that the innocence of the boy is dignified by the knowledge of the man.

Gov. He will hardly remember his old uncle!--- I did love the rogue, that's the truth on't; and never look'd at my money-bags but I thought of him. However, you have provided him a wife?

L. Glen. I have; you saw her on your arrival, I suppose, for I left her in town to attend a sick aunt. Poor Mortimer! he died one month before the Duke his brother, and missed a fine title and estate. You know how I loved the honest fellow, and cannot wonder I took home his orphan'd daughter, as a match for Woodville.

Gov. Brother, brother, you are too generous; it is your foible, and artful people know how to convert it to their own advantage.

L. Glen. It is, if a foible, the noblest incident to humanity. Sophia has birth, merit, accomplishments; and wants nothing but money to qualify her for any rank.

Gov.

Gov. Can she have a worse want on earth? Birth, merit, accomplishments, are the very things that render money more essential: if she had been brought up in a decent plain way indeed,---but she has the airs of a peerefs already; and, if any philosopher doubts of the perpetual motion, I would advise him to watch the knocker of your house. Then you have, out of your precise decorums, removed your son, to make way for this flirt of fashion; and what is the consequence of rendering him thus early his own master?

L. Glen. If you run on thus, only to divert yourself, with all my heart; but, if you would throw a real imputation on Miss Mortimer's conduct, she is entitled to my serious defence. I never saw any good arise from secluding young people; and authorise Woodville and Sophia to live with that innocent elegance, which renders every rank easy, and prevents pleasure from seducing the heart, or ignorance the senses.

Gov. My Lord, I am amazed at you! was there ever yet a woman who didn't mean to pass for a goddess? Do they not gain upon us continually, 'till nothing of our prerogative remains but the name? We are wise fellows truly, if we do not keep down this humour of theirs as long as possible, by breeding them in retirement. Every tinsel fop will find address enough to convince a wife she is an angel; and the husband must be lucky, as well as sensible, who reconciles her to treatment so inferior to her deserts. Woodville will agree with me, I dare say; for the character suits with his intended; and, 'faith, he will
make

make but a modish husband, or he could not endure to see her flying about, like the queen-bee with the whole hive at her heels.

L. Glen. You are too captious, brother!

Gov. And you too placid, brother! If, like me, you had been toiling a third of your days to compass a favourite design, and found it disappointed at the moment you thought it complete, what would even your serene Lordship say and do?---here have I promised myself a son in your's,---an heir in your's;---instead of which----

L. Glen. His marriage with Miss Mortimer will not make him unworthy either title.

Gov. Never mention her name to me, I beg, my Lord!---I hate all mode-mongers of either sex: the wife, I would have given him, has beauty without knowing it, innocence without knowing it, because she knows nothing else, and to surprize you further, forty thousand pounds without knowing it---nav, to bring all your surprizes together, is my daughter without knowing it.

L. Glen. Your daughter? why have you married since my sister's death? your daughter by *her*, you lost before you went abroad.

Gov. Yes, but I shall find her again, I believe.---I know you will call this one of my odd whims as usual, but we have all some; witness this dainty project of your's; and so I will tell you the truth in spite of that project---from the very birth of this girl, I saw her mother would spoil her, and, had she lived, proposed kidnapping Miss in her infancy.

L. Glen.

L. Glen. Kidnap your own daughter!---why brother I need only prove this to obtain a commission of lunacy, and shut you up for life.

Gov. Why, though my wife was your Lordship's sister, I will venture to tell you she was plaguy fantastical, and contrived to torment me as much with her *virtues*, as others by their *vices*---such a fuss about her *delicacy*, her *sensibility*, and her *refinement*, that I could neither look, move, nor speak, without offending one or the other; and execrated the inventor of the jargon every hour in the four and twenty: a jargon, I resolved my girl should never learn; and heav'n no sooner took her mother, (heav'n be prais'd for all things!) than I dispatched her draggle-tailed French governess; made a bonfire of every book on education; whip'd Miss into a post-chaise (under a pretence of placing her in a nunnery) instead of which, I journeyed into Wales, and left her in the care of a poor curate's wife, whose name was up as the best housewife in the whole country; then return'd, with a solemn history of her death in the small-pox.

L. Glen. Well, this is indeed astonishing! an admirable tutoress truly for my niece!

Gov. Yes, but there's a better jest than that.

L. Glen. Indeed!--is that possible?

Gov. How do you think I contrived to make them obey my instructions? I saw they suspected I was some rich humourist, and was afraid they would, after all, make a little bit of a gentlewoman of her, for which reason, except the first year in advance, they never had a single shilling of my money.

L. Glen.

L. Glen. This is almost incredible! and so you left your only child to the charity of strangers?

Gov. No, no, not so bad as that neither.---You remember my honest servant Hardy? after the poor fellow's leg was shot off in my tent, I promis'd him a maintenance; so entrusting him with the secret, I order'd him to live in the neighbourhood, have an eye on the girl, and claim her if ill-used:---fine accounts I had from him, 'faith! the old parson and his wife, having no children, and not finding any one own her, gave out she was *theirs*, and doated on her; in short, she is the little wonder of the country; tall as the palm-tree! with cheeks, that might shame the drawing-room; and eyes, will dim the diamonds I have brought over to adorn them---This confounded gout has kept me in continual alarm, or else she should have spoke for herself.

L. Glen. Why then does not Hardy bring her up to you?

Gov. Why for two very sufficient reasons:---in the first place, that identical parson paid him the last compliment, that is, buried him a twelvemonth ago; and in the second, they would hardly entrust her to any man but him who deliver'd her to them.---Here was a girl, my Lord, to support your title, of which I dare swear you are as fond as ever: she would have brought you a race of true Britons; instead of which, from the painted dolls and unjointed Macaronies of these days, we shall produce our own enemies, and have a race of Frenchmen born in England.

L. Glen.

L. Glen. I thank your *intention*, brother; but am far from wishing the chief accomplishments of Woodville's Lady should be the making *cream cheeses*, goats *whey*, and *alder wine*.

Gov. Let me tell your Lordship, women were never better than when those *were* their chief accomplishments.—But I may be ridiculous my own way, without being singular.—*Harcourt* shall have my girl, and my money too.—Cream *cheeses*, quotha? no, no, making cream *faces* is an accomplishment which the belles of these days oftener excel in.

L. Glen. I would not advise you to publish this opinion, Governor!

Gov. But where is this son of your's? sure he has not totally forgot his old uncle?

L. Glen. He will be here immediately.

Gov. Nay, I must e'en take an old man's fate, and follow his mistress without complaint.

L. Glen. You have no reason for the reproach; this is not his hour for visiting Miss Mortimer.

Gov. Miss Mortimer!—ha, ha, ha! why, do you think I took *her* for his mistress?—what, I warrant, I can tell you news of your own family, though I have hardly been three days in it?—Woodville keeps a girl, and in great splendor!—nay, they tell me, that the unconscionable young rogue encroaches so far on the privileges of threescore, as to intend marrying the slut.

L. Glen. You jest surely?

Gov. There's no jest like a true one—ha, ha, ha! how foolish you look!—this is your *innocent elegance*,

C

this

this is the blessed effect of letting him live out of your own house!——

L. Glen. Pr'ythee reserve your raillery, sir, for some less interesting occasion;—to have my views thus in a moment overturned!——where does she live?

Gov. Ha, ha, ha!——oh, the difference of those little syllables *me* and *thee*! now you can guess what made me so peevish, I suppose?——as to where Miss lives, I have not heard; but somewhere near *his* lodgings.—A devilish fine girl she is, by the bye.—Ah, I told you, twenty years ago, you would spoil this boy,—entirely spoil him.

L. Glen. Zounds! Governor, you have a temper Socrates himself could not have supported;——is this a time for old sayings of twenty years ago?——finish dressing;—by that time your nephew will be here, and I shall have reflected on this matter.

Gov. With all my heart,—'tis but a boyish frolick, and so good morning to you.—Here; where's my triumvirate? Pompey, Anthony, Cæsar? [*Exit.*

L. Glen. A boyish frolick truly!——many a foolish fellow's life has been mark'd by such a boyish frolick!——but her residence is the first object of my enquiry.——Vane.

Enter Vane.

Is not my son come?

Vane. This moment, my Lord; and walks 'till the Governor is ready.

L. Glen.

L. Glen. Vane!—I have deserved you should be attached to me, and I hope you are?

Vane. My Lord! (what the devil is he at?) [*Aside.*

L. Glen. This strange old Governor has alarmed me a good deal;—you are more likely to know, whether with reason, than I can be.—Have you heard any thing important of my son lately?

Vane. Never, my Lord.

L. Glen. Not that he keeps a mistress?—what does the fool smile at?

Vane. I did not think that any thing important, my Lord.

L. Glen. I do, sir---and am told a *more* important thing; that he even thinks of marrying her:---now, though I cannot credit this, I would chuse to know what kind of creature she is. Could not you assume a clownish disguise, and, scraping an acquaintance with her people, learn something of her character and designs?

Vane. Doubtless, to oblige your Lordship, *I could* do such a thing.—But, if Mr. Woodville's sharp eyes (and love will render them still sharper) should discover me, I might chance to get a good drubbing in the character of a spy.

L. Glen. Oh, it is very improbable he should suspect you:—at the worst, name your employer, and your bones are safe.—The office perhaps is not very agreeable, but I impose few such on you: execute it well, and you shall remember it with pleasure.—I will detain Woodville 'till you are ready; and, as I doubt not that his next visit will be to this

creature ; by following him you will find out where she lives. Prepare then as quick as possible, and send me word when you are ready ; for, 'till then, I will not suffer him to depart. *[Exit.*

Vane. A pretty errand this his formal Lordship has honor'd me with !——um ; if I *betray* him, shall I not get more by it ?——ay, but our heir is such a sentimental spark, that, when his turn was served, he might betray *me*. Were he one of our hare-um skare-um, good-natured, good-for-nothing fellows, it would go against my conscience to do him an ill turn.——I believe I stand well in my Lord's will, if Counsellor Puzzle may be trusted, (and, when he can get nothing by a lye, perhaps he may tell truth) so, like all thriving men, I will be honest because it best serves my interest. *[Exit.*

SCENE, *A Confin'd Garden.*

Woodville walking about.

Wood. How tedious is this uncle !——how tedious every body !——was it not enough to spend two detestable months from my love, merely to preserve the secret, but I must be tantalized with seeing without arriving at her ? yet how, when I do see her, shall I appease that affecting pride of a noble heart conscious too late of its own inestimable value ?——why was I not uniformly just ?——I had then spared myself the bitterest of regrets.

Enter

Enter Captain Harcourt.

Har. Woodville ! how do'st ?——don't you, in happy retirement, pity me my Ealing and Acton marches and countermarches, as Foote has it ?——but, methinks thy face is thinner and longer, than a forsaken nymph's who is going through the whole ceremony of a nine month's repentance.——What, thou'st fall'n in love ?——rustically too ?——nay, prithee don't look so very lamentable !

Wood. Ridiculous !——keep this Park-conversation for military puppies !——how can we have an eye or ear for pleasure, when our fate hangs over us undecided ?

Har. I guess what you mean : but why make mountains of mole-hills ? Is the rosy-fisted damsel so obstinately virtuous ?

Wood. Imagine a fair favourite of Phœbus in all respects ; since, while her face caught his beams, her heart felt his genius !——Imagine all the graces hid under a straw hat, and russet gown : imagine——

Har. You have *imagined* enough of conscience ! and now for a few plain facts, if you please.

Wood. To such a lovely country maid I lost my heart last summer ; and soon began to think romances the only true histories ; all the toilsome glories recorded by Livy, phantoms of pleasure, compared with the mild enjoyments described by Sir Philip Sydney ; and happiness not merely possible in a cottage, but *only* possible there.

Har.

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Har. Well; all the philosophers (ancient and modern) would never be able to convince me, a coach was not a mighty pretty vehicle; and the lasses as good-natured in town as country: but pray let us know, why you laid aside the pastoral project of eating fat bacon and exercising a crook all day, that thou might'st conclude the evening with the superlative indulgence of a peat-fire and a bed stuff'd with straw?

Wood. Why, faith, by persuading the dear girl to share mine.

Har. Oh, now you talk the language of the world: and does that occasion thee such a melancholy face?

Wood. How ignorant are you both of me and her!—ev'ry moment since I prevail'd, has only serv'd to convince me I can sooner live without ev'ry thing else than her; and this fatal leisure (caus'd by my absence with my father) she has employ'd in adding ev'ry grace of art to those of nature; 'till, thoroughly shock'd at her situation, her letters are as full of grief as love, and I dread to hear ev'ry hour I have lost her.

Har. I dread much more to hear you have lost yourself. Ah, my dear Woodville, the most dangerous charm of love is, ev'ry man conceits no other ever found out his method of loving: but, take my word for it, your Dolly may be brought back to a milk-maid.—Leave her to herself awhile, and she'll drop the celestial, I dare swear.

Wood.

Wood. She is too noble: and, nothing, but the duty I owe to so indulgent a father, prevents me from off'ring her all the reparation in my power.

Har. A fine scheme truly! why, Woodville, ar't frantic?---To predestinate yourself among the horned cattle of Doctors Commons, and take a wife for the very reason which makes so many spend thousands to get rid of one——

Wood. To withdraw an amiable creature from her duty, without being able to make her happy, is to me a very serious reflection;---nay, I sinned, I may say, from *virtue*: and, had I been a less grateful son, might have called myself a faultless lover.

Har. Well, well, man! you are young enough to trust to time, and he does wonders.---Don't go now and ruin yourself with your uncle;----I have found him out already, and advertise you, none of your formal obsequious bows and respectful assents will do with him; having been cheated in former times of half his fortune by a parasite, he mistrusts ev'ry one, and always mistakes politeness for servility. Maintain your own opinion, if you would win his; for he generally grows undetermined, the moment he knows those around him are otherwise: and, above all, shake off this mental lethargy.

Wood. I will endeavour to take your advice.----Should she fly I were undone for ever!----but you are no judge of my Cecilia's sincerity. How should you know those qualities, which rise with ev'ry following hour?---Can you think so meanly of me, as that I could be duped by a vulgar wretch? a selfish wanton?

ch

oh no!--she possesses every virtue but the one I have robbed her of. [Exit.

Harcourt *alone*.

Har. Poor Frank! thy sponsors surely, by intuition, characterized thee when they gave thee that name. ---Did I love your welfare less, I could soon ease your heart, by acquainting you of my marriage with Miss Mortimer; but now the immediate consequence would be this ridiculous match.---How, if I apprize either my Lord or the Governor? both obstinate in different ways: I might betray only to ruin him.---A thought occurs;---my person is unknown to her---choosing an hour when he is absent, I'll pay her a visit, offer her an advantageous settlement, and learn from her behaviour her real character and intentions. [Exit.

THE END OF THE FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

SCENE, *An elegant Dressing-Room, with a Toilette richly ornamented. A Harpsichord, and a Frame with Embroidery.*

Bridget fetches various small Jars with Flowers, and talks as she places them.

Brid. **L**ORD help us! how fantastical some folks not an hundred miles off are! If I can imagine what's come to my lady?---Here has she been sighing and groaning these two months, because her lover was in the country; and now truly, she's sighing and groaning because he's come to town. Such maggots indeed! I might as well have staid in our parish all the days of my life, as to live mew'd up with her in this dear sweet town: I could but have done that with a *vairtuous* lady---altho' I know she never was at Fox-hall in all her jaunts, and we two should cut such a figure there!---Bless me! what's come to the glass? (*setting her dress*) why sure it's dull'd with her eternal sighing, and makes me look as frightful as herself!---Oh, here she comes with a face as long, and dismal, as if he was going to be married, and to somebody else too.

D

Cecilia

18 THE CHAPTER OF ACCIDENTS:

Cecilia enters, and throws herself on the Sopha, leaning on her hand.

Cec. What can detain Woodville such an age!--- it is an hour at least since he rode by. Run, Bridget! and look if you can see him through the drawing-room window.

Brid. Yes, madam. (*Exit, eyeing her with contempt.*)

Cec. How wearisome is ev'ry hour to the wretched!---they catch at each future one, merely to while away the present. For, were Woodville here, could he relieve me from the torment of reflection? or the strong, though silent, acknowledgment my own heart perpetually gives of my error?

Brid. (without) Here he comes, ma'am, here he comes!

Cec. Does he?---run down then---(*fluttered.*)

Brid. Dear me, no; 'tis not neither: (*enters*) 'tis only the French Ambassador's new cook, with his huge bag and long ruffles.

Cec. Blind animal! Sure nothing is so tormenting as expectation.

Brid. La, ma'am! any thing will torment one, when one has a mind to be tormented; which must be your case for certain. What signifies sitting mope, mope, mope, from morning to night? You'd find yourself a deal better if you went out only two or three times a day.—For a walk, we are next door to the park, as I may say: and, for a ride, such a dear sweet vis-a-vis and pretty horses might tempt any one: then, as to company, you'll say, “a fig for your starch'd
“ ladies,

"ladies, who owe their virtue to their ugliness;"----mine is very much at your service. (*Curtseys*)

Cec. How could I endure this girl, did I not know that her ignorance exceeds even her impertinence?---I have no pleasure in going abroad.

Brid. Oh la, ma'am! how should you know 'till you try? Sure ev'ry body must wish to see and be seen. Then there's such a delightful hurricane----all the world are busy, tho' most are doing nothing:----to splash the mob, and drive against the people of quality; ---oh, give me a coach, and London for ever and ever! You could but lock yourself up, were you as old and ugly as gay Lady Grizzle at next door.

Cec. Had I been so, I had continued happy.

Brid. La, ma'am, don't ye talk so purphanelly! ----happy, to be old and ugly?----or, I'll tell you what, as you don't much seem to fancy going out, suppose you were to come down now and then (you know we have a pure large hall) and take a game of romps with *us*? If you were once to see our Jacob hunt the slipper, you would die with laughing!----Madam Frisk (my last mistress) used, as soon as ever master was gone, (and indeed he did not trouble her much with his company) to run down, draw up her brocaded niggie-de-gee, and fall to play at some good fun or other:---dear heart! we were as merry then as the day was long; I am sure I have never been half so happy since.

Cec. I cannot possibly imitate the model you propose; but tho' I don't chuse to go abroad, you may.

Brid. I don't love to go much among the mobility neither. If indeed, madam, next winter you'd give me some of your tickets, I would fain go to a masquerade (it vexes me to see um stick in the thing-um-bobs for months together) and Mrs. Trim promises me the lent of a *Wenus's* drefs, which, she says, I shall cut a figure in. Now, ma'am, if I had but some diamonds, (for beggars wear diamonds there, they say) who knows but I might make my fortune, like you?

Cec. Mar it, much rather, like me.---That is no place for girls of your station, which exposes you to so much insult.

Brid. Ah, let me alone, madam, for taking care of number one. I ware never afeard but once in my whole life, and that ware of grandfar's ghost; for he always hated I, and used to walk, (poor soul!) in our barken, for all the world like an afs with a tye-wig on.---
(*Knocking hard.*)

Cec. Hark! that sure is Woodville's knock! fly, and see! (*Walks eagerly to the door, and returns as eagerly*)---Alas, is this my repentance? dare I sin against my judgment?

Enter Woodville.

Wood. My Cecilia!--my soul!--have I at last the happiness of beholding you? You know me too well to imagine I would punish *myself* by a moment's voluntary delay.

Cec. Oh, no; it is not that---(*both sit down on the sofa.*)

Wood.

Wood. Say, you are glad to see me?---afford me one kind word to atone for your cold looks!---are you not well?

Cec. Rather say I am not happy.---My dear Woodville, I am an altered being: why have you reduced me to shrink thus in your presence?---oh, why have you made me unworthy of yourself?---(*leans against his shoulder weeping.*)

Wood. Cruel girl!---is this my welcome?---when did I appear to think you so?

Cec. Tell me, when any one else will think me otherwise?

Wood. Will you never be above so narrow a prejudice? are we not the whole world to each other?---nay, dry your tears! allow me to dry them; (*kisses her cheek*) what is there, in the reach of love or wealth, I have not sought to make you happy?

Cec. That which is the essence of all enjoyments,---innocence:---oh, Woodville, you knew not the value of the heart, whose peace you have destroyed.---My sensibility first ruined my virtue, and then my repose.---But, though for you I consented to abandon an humble happy home, to embitter the age of my venerable father, and bear the contempt of the world, I can never support my own. My heart revolts against my situation, and hourly bids me renounce a splendor, which only renders guilt more despicable. (*Rises*) I meant to explain this hereafter; but the agitation of my mind obliged me to lighten it immediately.

Wood.

Wood. Is your affection then already extinct? for sure it must, when you can resolve to torture me thus.

Cec. Were my love extinct, I might sink into a mean content!—oh no.---'Tis to that alone I owe my resolution.

Wood. Can you then plunge me into despair?----so young, so lovely too!---oh, where could you find so safe an asylum as my heart?---whither could you fly?

Cec. I am obliged to you, sir, for the question; but who is it has made me thus destitute?---I may retain your protection, indeed, but at what a price!

Wood. Give me but a little time, my love! I am equally perplexed between my father and my uncle; each of whom offers me a wife I can never love. Suffer them to defeat each other's schemes!---let me, if possible, be happy without a crime; for I must think it one, to grieve a parent hitherto so indulgent.---I will not put any thing in competition with your peace; and long for the hour when the errors of the lover will be absorb'd in the merits of the husband.

Cec. No, Woodville! that was, when innocent, as far above my hopes, as it is now beyond my wishes.——I love you too sincerely to reap any advantage from so generous an error; yet you at once flatter and wound my heart, in allowing me worthy such a distinction: but love cannot subsist without esteem; and how should I possess your's, when I have lost even my own?

Wood.

Wood. It is impossible you should ever lose either, while so deserving both.---I shall not be so easily denied hereafter, but am bound by the caprices of others at present.---I am obliged to return directly, but will hasten to you the very first moment;---when we meet again, it must be with a smile, remember.

Cec. It will, when we meet again.---Oh how those words oppress me! (*aside*) but do not regulate your conduct by mine, nor make me an argument with yourself, for disobeying my Lord; for here I solemnly swear never to accept you without the joint consent of both our fathers; and that I consider as an eternal abjuration:---but, may the favor'd woman you are to make happy, have all my love without my weakness!

[*Exit in tears.*]

Wood. Disinterested, exalted girl!---why add such a needless bar? for is it possible to gain my father's consent? and yet, without her, life would be insupportable:---the censures of the world,---what is that world to me?---were I weak enough to sacrifice her to the erroneous judgment of the malicious and unfeeling, what does it offer to reward me?---commendations I can never deserve, and riches I can never enjoy.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE,

SCENE, *A Street before Cecilia's House.*

Jacob opens the Door and lets out Woodville, who passes over the Stage; Jacob remains with his Hands in his Pockets, whistling.

Enter Vane, disguis'd, with a Basket of Game in his Hand.

Vane. So, there he goes at last, I may open the attack without fear of a discovery, since our hopeful heir will hardly return directly----This intelligence of my landlord's of the Blue Posts has made the matter much easier.-----Um, a good subject!-----sure I ought to know that Bumpkin's face! as I live, my playfellow at the parish-school, Jacob Gawky!-----now for a touch of the old dialect-----d'ye hire, young mon!---prey, do ye knaw where one Bett Dowson do live?

Jac. Noa; not I.---

Vane. Hay!---why, zure as two-pence, thou beest Jacob Gawky!

Jac. Odsbodlikins! zo I be indeed!---but, who beest thee?

Vane. What, doost not knaw thy ould zkhool-fellow, Wull, mun?

Jac. Hay!---What,---Wull?---od rabbit it, if I ben't desprate glad to zee thee, where doo't live now, mun?

Vane. Down at huome, in our parish;---I be com'd up with Sir Izaac Promise, to be meade excoise-man?

Jac. Thee'ft good luck, faith! wifh, no odds to thee, my fortin ware as good!--but theed'ft *always* a muortal good notion of wroiting and cyphers, while I don't knaw my own neame when I do zee it.----What didft leave zea for?

Vane. Why, I ware afraid I fould be killed before I com'd to be a great mon:---but what brought thee into this foine houle?

Jac. Fortin, Wull! fortin.---Didft thee knaw Nan o' th' Mill?

Vane. Noa, not I.

Jac. Od rabbit it! I thought ev'ry muortal zoul had knawd zhe.---Well, Nan and I ware fuch near neighbors, there ware only a barn between us;---fhe ware a desperate zmart lafs, that's the truth on't: and I had half a moind to teake to feyther's bufinefs, and marry zhe:---but ecod the zimpletony grow'd fo fond, that fome how or other, I ware tired firft! when, behold you, zquire takes a fancy to me, and made I cuome and live at the hall; and, as my head run all on tuown, when aw comed up to London, aw brought I wi' un:---zo I thought to get rid that way of the bullocking of Nan.

Vane. But, Jacob, how didft get into thic fine houle?

Jac. Dang it, doan't I zeay, I'll tell thee pre-fent---Zoa, as I ware faying,---one holiday I went to zee thic there church, wi' the top like a huge punch-bowl turned auver; and, dang it! who fould arrive in the very nick, but madam Nan-----well, huome comes I as merry as a cricket;---'squire caals for I in a muortal hurry; when who fould I zee, but madam Nan on her marrowbones a croying for dear

E

loife!

loife!—dang it, I thought at first I should ha' zwounded;—zo a made a long zarment about 'ducing a poor girl, and zaid I should certainly go to the divil for it, and then turn'd I off. But the best fun is to come, mun;—rabbit me! if aw did not teake Nan into keeping himself; and zhe do flaunt it about, as foine as a duchefs!

Vane. A mighty religious moral gentleman, truly!
(*Aside*) Well, now you came to this pleace?

Jac. Why, Meay-day, walking in Common Garden to smell the pozeys, who zould I see but our Bridget?—I was muortal glad to zee her, you must needs think, and zhe got I this here place.

Vane. Wounds! dost live wi' a Lord in this foine house?

Jac. Noa; a Leady, you fool! but such a Leady, zuch a dear, easy, good-natur'd creature!—zhe do never say noa, let we do what we wull.

Vane. Now to the point, (*aside*) is your Lady married?

Jac. Noa: but she's as good; and what'ft think, mun?—to a Lord's zon!—tho' if a ware a King, aw would not be too good for zhe.—A mortal fine comely mon too, who do love her, as aw do the eyes in his head. Couzin Bridget do tell I, zhe zee'd a letter, where aw do zay aw wull ha her any day of the week, whatever do come o'th' next.—Why, I warrant, they have pointed wedding-day!

Vane. The devil they have? my Lord will go mad at this news. (*Aside*)

Jac. Lauk a deazy! how merry we will be on that day! wot come and junket wi' us?

Vane.

Vane. Yes, yes, I shall certainly make one among you,—either then or before; (*aside*)—but now I must go and give this geame to zquire—zquire—what the Dickens be his neame? I do *always* forget it,—there zhould be a ticket somewhere:—zoa,—rabbit me! if some of your London fauk ha' no' cut it off, out o' fun!

Jac. Ha, ha, ha! ecod nothing more likelier,—(*both laugh foolishly*) thee rum people be zo zharp as needles.—But there's no pplace like it, for all that—I be set upon living and dying in it.

Vane. Now to secure my return if necessary. (*Aside*)—I'll tell thee what, Jacob! seeing as how I ha lost thic there direction, do thee teake the basket: 'tis only a present of geame from the parson o' our parish; and, if zo be I can't find the gentleman, why 'tis honestly mine.—Meay be I'll come, and teake a bit o' supper wi' ye.

Jac. Wull ye indeed?—dang it! that's clever; and then you'll see our Bridget. She's a mortal zmart lass, I promise ye!—and, meay be, may'ft get a peep at my Lady, who's desperate handsome!—good bye t'ye.—Bridget's zo comical!—od rabbit it, we'll be main merry. [*Exit.*

Vane alone.

Vane. Thus far I have succeeded to admiration!—our young heir has really a mind to play the fool and marry his mistress!—tho', faith, marrying *his own* does not seem very inexcusable, when so many of his

equals modestly content themselves with the cast-offs of half *their acquaintance*. [Exit.

SCENE, *An Apartment in Cecilia's House.*

Enter Bridget.

Brid. So, just the old story again! crying, crying for ever!—Lord, if I was a man, I should hate such a whimpering—what would she have, I wonder? to refuse such a handsome, genteel, good-natur'd man!—and, I'll be sworn, he offer'd to marry her; for I listened with all my ears!—oh, that he would have *me* now!—I should become my own coach purdigiously, that's a sure thing. Hay, who knocks?

Enter Jacob.

Jac. A young man do want my Leady.

Brid. A man?—what sort of a man?

Jac. Why a man—like—just such another as I.

Brid. No, no, no;—that's not so easy to find:—what can any man want with her? shew him in here, Jacob.

Jac. (*Returning in a kind of glee*) When shall we have the wedding, Bridget?

Brid. We shall have a burying first, I believe.

Jac. Od rabbit it! we won't be their seconds there, faith! [Exit.

Brid. Now, if he mistakes me for my Lady, I shall find out what he wants.

Enter

Enter Captain Harcourt, disguised, with Jacob.

Har. (*Surveying her*)—Is *that* your Lady?

Jac. He, he, he! lauk, zur, don't ye know that's our Bridget? [*Exit.*

Brid. So, deuce on him, there's my whole scheme spoilt!—my Lady, fir, is engaged; but, if you tell me your business, it will do just as well.

Har. For yourself it may, child! (*chucks her under the chin.*)

Brid. What, you belong to Mr. Gargle the apothecary? or come from the jeweller on Ludgate-hill? or have a letter from——

Har. (*Interrupting her.*)—The very person; you have hit it. And now, do me the favour to tell your Lady, a *stranger* wishes to speak to her on particular business.

Brid. Very well, fir:---was ever handsome man so crabbed! [*Exit.*

Har. Egad, if the mistress have half as much tongue as the maid, Woodville may catch me in the midst of my first speech.—Now for my credentials! and here she comes!---a lovely girl indeed! I can scarce blame Frank, for she awes me.

Enter Cecilia, followed officiously by Bridget.

Cec. I was informed, fir, you had particular business with me?

Har. I took the liberty, madam,---I say, madam, I----

Cec.

Cec. As I have neither friends or relations in London, (*sighs*) I am at a loss to guess——

Har. What I would communicate, madam, requires secrecy.

Cec. Bridget, go where I ordered you just now.

Brid. Yes, madam;---but if I an't even with you for this. [*Exit.*

Cec. I complied with your request, Sir, without enquiring the motive; because you, I think, *can* have only one---My father, if I may trust my heart, has made you his messenger to an unwilling offender.

Har. Pardon me, madam, but I refer you to this.

Cec. (*Reads*)

“ Madam,

“ Being certainly informed Mr. Woodville is on the point of marrying a Lady chosen by his friends, when it is presumed you will be disengaged, a nobleman of rank, and estate above what *he* can ever possess, is thus early in laying his heart and fortune at your feet, lest some more lucky rival should anticipate him.—— The bearer is authorised to disclose all particulars, and offer you a settlement worthy your acceptance.—— Deign, madam, to listen to him on the subject, and you will find the unknown lover as generous and not less constant than Woodville.”

Cec. Good heavens! to what an insult have I exposed myself! [*She bursts into tears, and sinks into a chair, without minding Harcourt; who watches her with irresolution.*]

Har. What can I think?—there is an air of injur'd delicacy in her, which teaches me to reproach myself for a well-meant deceit.——If, madam,——

Cec.

Cec. I had forgot this wretch. (*Rises*) Return, fir, to your vile employer ; tell him, whoever he is, I am too sensible of the insult, tho' not entitled to resent it—tell him, I have a heart above my situation, and that he has only had the barbarous satisfaction of adding another misery to those which almost overwhelmed me before.

Har. Hear me, madam, I conjure you !

Cec. Never ! a word would contaminate me.—
(*Struggling to go off.*)

Har. Nay, you shall—You do not know half the good consequences of this letter ; I am the friend, the relation of Woodville—my name Harcourt !

Cec. Is it possible *he* should be so cruel, so unjust——

Har. He is neither cruel nor unjust, but only unfortunate.----Hear---he designs to marry you ; this I learnt from himself only this morning. As a proof of my sincerity, I will own I doubted your right to that mark of his esteem, and made this trial in consequence. Pleas'd to find you worthy of his rank, I feel shock'd at reminding you, you ought not to share it. But, madam, if you truly love him, you cannot wish that to be just to you, he should be unjust to those who have a prior right over him.---This shall positively be my last effort. (*Aside*)

Cec. A motive like your's, fir, will excuse any thing. How little my happiness, honour, or interest, *ever* weighed against his, need not be repeated. Far be it from me *now* to disgrace him ; he is apprized of my invincible objections to a match which will never

take place. May he form a happier, while I by a voluntary poverty expiate my offence.

Har. Ma----- Ma---- what the devil choaks me so?---I am struck with your sentiments, and must find you a proper asylum. The moment I saw you, I had hopes such manners could not veil an immoral heart. I have proved your sincerity, and owe a reparation to your delicacy. The proposed bride of Woodville is every way worthy that distinction; nor am I without hopes even *she* will be prevailed on to protect you.---- But I must not leave a doubt of my sincerity:---do you know Miss Mortimer?

Cec. I have seen the lady, sir. But dare I credit my senses?----has heav'n form'd two such hearts, and for me?-----

Har. With her, your story will be buried for ever: and, I think, the sooner you disappear, the more easily will you prevent Woodville's disobedience. I will open the affair to Miss Mortimer directly, and, if she acquiesces, desire her to call for you in person, to prevent the possibility of any artifice.

Cec. He, who inspired such sentiments, alone can reward them! Oh, sir, you have raised a poor desponding heart; but it shall be the business of my future life to deserve those favours I can never half repay.

Har. I find, by punishing me with acknowledgments, you are resolved to be obliged to me. The time is too precious to be wasted on such trifles. At seven, you shall have certain intelligence of my success:

cess : employ the interim to the best advantage, and hope every thing from daring to deserve well.

[*Exit.*

Cecilia alone.

Astonishing interposition of heav'n!---Hope?--- what have I to hope?--- but, let the consciousness of acting rightly support me in the sad moment of renouncing Woodville ; and, in him, all that render'd life desirable.

SCENE, *Lord Glenmore's House.*

Lord Glenmore and Vane.

L. Glen. And are you sure of all this ?

Vane. Absolutely, my Lord ! I have known the bumpkin, her footman, from the height of his own club.

L. Glen. What a curs'd infatuation!---these are the comforts of children ;---our fears beginning, from the moment our power ends ;---the happiest of fathers is not to be envied ;---I know not what to resolve on !

Vane. If I may be permitted to advise, my Lord---

L. Glen. And who ask'd your advice, sir ?

Vane. You have, my Lord,-- formerly.

L. Glen. Take care you stay 'till I do ! leave me, sir.

F

Vane.

Vane. If you don't like my advice, I shall give you my opinion very shortly.---A crusty crab!

[*Exit muttering.*]

L. Glen. This is the certain consequence of entrusting low people;---and yet there is no doing without them.---I can never master my feelings enough to speak properly to Woodville on the subject, therefore must fix on some other method---(*pauses*)---That's a sure one, and falls heavy on the artful, aspiring creature, only!---Vane!---

Re-enter Vane.

---Could not you procure me a travelling-chaise and four stout fellows immediately?

Vane. To be sure, my Lord, I can order a chaise at any inn, if you chuse it.

L. Glen. Pho, pho,---don't put on that face;---you must go through with this thing like a man.---Here's something for the share you have already had in it.---Do what I have ordered, and wait near the Horse Guards in about an hour; when I shall seize this insolent baggage, and convey her out of my son's reach.---You gave me a high-flown account of her:---and, as you are a smart young fellow, and she must at least be pretty, if we can contrive to frighten her into taking *you* as a husband, it will end all my fears, and shall be the making of your fortune.

Vane. Gad, I like the project well.---A handsome wife is the best bait, when we fish for preferment;---and this gives me a double claim both on father and son. (*aside*) Nothing but the profound respect I have
for

for your Lordship could induce me to think of this;—though born without rank and fortune, I have a soul, my Lord,——

L. Glen. Come, come; my good lad! I guess what you would say: but we have no time for speeches.---I have set my heart on the success of this project; and you shall find your interest in indulging me.

[*Exeunt different ways.*]

SCENE, *Miss Mortimer's Apartment.*

Enter Captain Harcourt, meeting Miss Mortimer.

Har. If I were to judge of your temper by your looks, my dear, I should say it was uncommonly sweet this morning.

M. Mor. A truce with compliment; I must, in reason, renounce dear flattery after marriage.

Har. To flattery you never paid court: but the language of the heart and the world will sometimes resemble.—I ought, however, to praise your temper, for I am come to try it,---and give you a noble opportunity of exerting its benevolence.

M. Mor. A benevolence you certainly doubt, by this studied eulogium.

Har. I might, did I not know it well.---In short, my love, I have taken the strangest step this morning——

M. Mor. What step, for heav'n's sake?

Har. In regard to a lady.-----

M. Mor. Not another wife, I hope?

Har. No,---only a mistress.-----

M. Mor. Oh, a trifle; a trifle.---

Har. You may laugh, madam, but I am serious ; and a fine girl she is : nay to shew you I have not read Chesterfield in vain, I have robb'd my dearest friend of her ; in plain English, Woodville has a mistress he doats on so madly, as even to intend marrying her.---Imagining her, like most of her stamp, only an artful and interested creature, I paid her a visit as a stranger, with an offer which must have unveil'd her heart, had it been base :---but I found her, on the contrary, a truly noble-minded girl, and far above her present situation ; which she earnestly wishes to quit.---In short, my dear, I thought it prudent to part them ; and, in your name, offered her an asylum.

M. Mor. In my name ? You amaze me, Mr. Harcourt ! Would you associate your wife with a kept mistress ? bring such an acquisition into the house of Lord Glenmore, and deprive Woodville of perhaps his only reason for not interfering with us ?---Do you think I credit this *sudden* acquaintance ?

Har. I deceiv'd myself, I find :---I thought you above such low suspicion, that you could make distinctions.

M. Mor. Yes, yes, I can make distinctions more clearly than you wished. You must excuse my interference in this affair, sir ; and let me hint to you, that your own will do as little credit to your heart as to your understanding.

Har. Mighty well, madam ; go on ! Settle this with respect to yourself, but do not be concerned about me ; for, in one word, if you cannot resolve on protecting this poor unfortunate, I will.

M. Mor. (*Aside*) That must not be; yet his warmth alarms me.---Nay but, my dear, think deliberately!---Supposing her all you say, the world judges by actions, not thoughts, and will bury her merit in her situation.

Har. It is that cruel argument perpetuates error in so many of your frail sex: be the first to rise above it. That you are in Lord Glenmore's house, will be your justification, both to the world and himself: for, what but a generous motive can actuate you? In my eyes, my dear Sophia, virtue never looks so lovely as when she stretches out her hand to the fallen.

M. Mor. Oh, Harcourt! I am ashamed of my suspicion: I ought to have known all the candour and generosity of your heart, and received in a moment the unhappy woman it patronized:---yet, at this crisis, in our own affairs to run the chance of further exasperating my benefactor-----

Har. I am not to learn, that friendship and love have been mere masks to fraud and folly in the great world; no one would blame me, were I to suffer Woodville to ruin himself, as the shortest way of fixing my own fortune, and obtaining my Lord's approbation of your choice. But, I know not how it happened, that, when a mere boy, I took it into my head, truth was as much to the purpose as lying; and, as I never got into more scrapes than others, why I still pursue my system, and prefer honour to art. Then, if we fail, we have something better to console us than a pond or a pistol; and, if we succeed, what is there wanting to our happiness?

M. Mor.

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M. Mor. And how do you mean to manage her escape?

Har. That, my dearest, is the difficulty. I found she had seen you, and therefore was obliged to satisfy her of my honour, by assuring her you would call for her in person.

M. Mor. Very well; we must carefully watch our opportunity. You dine here---the *word* of command you are accustomed to obey, but you must now become obedient to the *look*: for, you know, I have my difficulties, however strong my desire of obliging you.

[*Exeunt.*

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

SCENE I. *A magnificent Drawing-Room.*

Miss Mortimer pouring out Coffee sends it to the Company; Captain Harcourt leans against a Pannel near her, sipping it; at a little Distance the Governor and Woodville playing at Backgammon, while Lord Glenmore leans over his Chair, thoughtfully observing the Behaviour of his Son, who loses merely to make his Uncle leave off.

Har. **I**T grows near the appointed hour, my love!--but how to make sure of Woodville.

M. Mor. You should have thought of that before, my sagacious confidante! However, as I do not need your company, fasten it upon him;---pretend a duel,---pretend an intrigue;---in short, if all else fails, pretend you are dying, and keep him to make your will, rather than suffer him to interrupt me.

L. Glen. (*to himself*) What way can I secure the absence of this son of mine? for, I see plainly, another lucky hit would almost provoke him into throwing the dice in the Governor's face: yet Vane, I doubt, has hardly been able to procure me ev'ry convenience in so short a time. However, I will make one of my own garrets his minx's prison, rather than suffer her to interfere with my serious views.

Gov.

Gov. (*Rising from play*) Zounds, Frank! you are like the French; so ready to be beat, that there is hardly any triumph in conquering you. But you shall take your revenge, I insist upon it.

Wood. Another time, sir;---my head aches;---my ---in short, I cannot play any longer; my cousin will engage with you.

Har. (*twitching his sleeve*) Kind sir, your cousin is infinitely indebted to you; but he, like yourself, may have something else to do; and so indeed has ev'ry body, for we all seem impatient to separate.

M. Mor. (*to the servant, removing coffee*) Bid Warner send my cloak.

L. Glen. Going abroad, my dear?

M. Mor. Only a formal round, my Lord.

L. Glen. Woodville, you attend Miss Mortimer.

M. Mor. Sweetly contrived that, however, and my lover seems posed. (*Aside to Harcourt*)---I will not so severely tax Mr. Woodville's politeness, my Lord.

Wood. You are very obliging, madam; (*to Harcourt*) and the only thing she has said or done to oblige me this day, *entre nous*.

Har. (*aside*) Um, not quite sure of that, if you knew all---(*turning to Miss Mortimer*) I will march off quietly, and lie in wait for Woodville, so that I think you may depend on his not meeting you.

[*Goes off unobserved.*]

[*Woodville, having taken his hat and sword, offers his hand to Miss Mortimer.*]

L. Glen. So, he is going to escape! They all take pleasure in perplexing me. Frank, return to me directly;

rectly; I have bethought myself of something very important, in which I need your assistance.

Wood. Would I had bethought myself of vanishing, like Harcourt! How devilishly vexatious!

[*Leads Miss Mortimer off.*]

Gov. So, there goes madam, to coquette, curtsy, and talk nonsense with every well-dressed ape of either sex. Before I would allow a girl such a freedom---

L. Glen. Brother, do not judge 'till you know her and give me leave to tell you, these prejudices of your temper will render you very ridiculous.

Gov. The prejudices of *my* temper! Oh Lord, Oh Lord! this is an excellent jest. Zounds, because you have not the use of your eyes.---

L. Glen. I shall never have patience. My head is just now full of something too important, to examine which of us is most in the wrong. I am fixed on removing this ambitious minx of my son's for ever out of his reach immediately. Will you oblige me with the company of your servants? Being slaves, they will not dare reveal the affair; and, were they so inclined, can hardly comprehend it.

Gov. Will I? ay, that I will; and with my own company into the bargain.

L. Glen. Hift! he returns; and, if we may judge by his countenance, mortified enough, to lose the evening away from her.

Re-enter Woodville.

Go, my dear Frank, first to Puzzle's chambers, for

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the mortgage of Hayfield house, and don't fail to learn his whole opinion upon the subject; (*aside to the Governor*) and that will take two long hours by a very moderate computation;---then proceed to the London Tavern, and ask if Levi, the Jew, waits there by my appointment? otherwise do you wait there till either he or I join you.

Wood. A pretty round-about employment my father has invented for me! (*aside*) and I dare not give the least symptoms of disgust, lest that troublesome old uncle of mine should pry into the cause. I shall observe your orders, my Lord---though if the devil has called upon the counsellor a little before his time, I shall consider it as an eternal obligation. [*Exit.*]

L. Glen. Now I must enquire after Vane. [*Exit.*]

Gov. And I will give a little lecture to my myrmidons, and wait with them your pleasure. Od, it will be precious sport, to catch madam so unawares, and see her play off every virtuous grimace with which she entangled young 'Scapegrace. [*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE, *The Hall.*

Enter Vane, looking about.

Hey-day; sure his old-fashioned Lordship has not employed two of us on one errand! An old man has been hov'ring about madam's house, and has followed me here, without my knowing what to make of him. However, ears befriend me! [*Retires listening.*]

Enter

Enter the Governor, and his black Servants soon after.

Here Anthony, Pompey, Cæsar! you dogs, be ready to attend my Lord and me on a little expedition. ---No; no flambeaus, boobies!---the chaste Miss Diana will surely take a spiteful pleasure in lighting us to catch another kind of Miss.---And, do ye hear? not one syllable of the when, where, or how, except you intend to dangle on one string, like a bunch of black grapes.
[Talks to them apart.

Enter Grey.

Grey. It is here, I am at length informed, the father of this abandoned seducer resides.---Yet, what redress can poverty hope from pride?---surely, however, for his own sake, he will assist me in regaining the poor girl, and afterwards prevent the wretch from pursuing her?---there I suppose he is!--- my Lord.

Gov. (*Turns short upon him*) Well, old sturdy! what do you want with my Lord?

Grey.---Merciful heav'n! the father of Cecilia

Vane. (*Listening*) Hey?--- indeed!

Grey. Oh! how my heart misgives me! perhaps, this base Woodville--- her very brother----

Gov. What, is the old man ill?---sure I know this honest---it is not---yet it is---Grey?

Grey. The same indeed, my Lord.

Gov. No my Lord, to me, man! my name is Harcourt.

Grey. Blessed be heav'n for that however!

Gov. Be not righteous over much! for that my name is Harcourt, I do not reckon among the first favours of heav'n.---But, ha, ha! perhaps you thought I had no name at all by this time?---'faith, I put a pretty trick upon---well, well, well!---(*to the blacks*) you may retire till my Lord is ready. [*Exeunt.*

I am a riddle, honest Grey! but now I am come to expound myself, and make thy fortune into the bargain.---It is many a long day since I saw old England.---But at last I am come home with a light heart and a heavy purse, design to fetch up my Cicely, give her and my money to the honestest fellow I can find, and grow old amid' a rosy race of Britons springing from a stem rear'd after my own fashion.---There's news for you, my honest friend.

Grey. Alas, how little will he think I deserve his favour, when he hears my account of her! and how can I shock a parent, with what too severely shocks even myself? [*Aside.*

Gov. What,--silent, man?--ha, ha, ha! I can't but laugh to think how foolish you look'd at the second year's end, when no allowance came,---but that was my own contrivance: all done on purpose, my good old soul! and now it will come in a lump; there's the whole difference.---Well, and so my dame made her a pattern of housewifery, hey?--od! I don't intend to touch another pickle or preserve that is not of my little Cicely's own doing; and I'll build her a dairy with ev'ry bowl and churn of silver!---zounds, it shall be a finer sight than the Tower of London!---and

and we'll set up dame Deborah's statue before it, like Queen Ann's in St. Paul's Church-yard!---but, why dost'nt enjoy this discov'ry, man? ar't afraid I shall take her from thee? oh, never think of that; for thou shalt bless ev'ry pye she makes; ay, and *taste* it afterwards, Old Pudding-Sleeves.

Grey. Ah, sir! (*sighing.*)

Gov. Hey? Zounds!---what dost mean? sure my Cicely isn't dead?

Grey. No, not dead, sir!

Gov. She's very near it, then, I suppose?

Grey. No, Sir.

Gov. No, Sir? then what the devil do you mean by alarming me thus, with your "No Sirs," after all?

Grey. Alas, is there no greater evil?

Gov. None, that I know of; but your whole fraternity are not more like ravens in colour t'an note; ---come, let us know what this mighty evil is?

Grey. For years did she increase in goodness as in beauty; the charm of ev'ry young heart, and the sole comfort of those old ones, to whom heav'n and man seem'd to have consign'd her for ever.

Gov. Well, well; I had a little bird told me all this----

Grey. About a twelvemonth ago, during a little absence of mine, a young man of fashion introduced himself into my house: and, my wife being void of suspicion, and the dear girl uninstructed in the ways of this bad world,---

Gov.

Gov. The dog betray'd her?---and is this your care, you old---and that ignoramus, your wife---zounds! I am in such a fury;—I want to know no more of her infamous conduct.—Od! I am strangely tempted to have you strangled this moment, as a just reward for your negligence; and so bury the secret with you.

Grey. It is as effectually buried already, Sir,—I love the dear unhappy girl too well, ever to tell her heav'n gave her to such a father.

Gov. Yes, yes;—you are better suited to the—I hope she pays for this severely! you make her stand in a white sheet, to be pointed at by the whole village ev'ry Sunday, to be sure?

Grey. Alas, Sir, she put it out of my power even to forgive her.---

Gov. Forgive her! forgive her truly!

Grey. By flying immediately from her only friend. ---Infirm and poor, I struggled with the joint-evils till now; when, having collected enough to support me, I walk'd up in search of her:---it was only yesterday I discovered her in a splendid coach, which I traced to her house.

Gov. A *house*, I shall run mad entirely---a *coach*? ---why dare the little brazen-face pretend to elegance, when I took such pains to quench ev'ry spark of gentility in her?

Grey. In the neighbourhood I discover'd the name of her seducer; and, in seeking him, met with you.—Moderate your passion, Sir,—reflect! when age is frail, what can we expect in youth?---shall man desert humanity?

Gov.

Gov. So, so, so; now I am to be tortur'd with your preaching.---I renounce the unworthy little slut.---I have no friend,---no daughter,---no any thing;---od! I would sooner build an hospital for ideots, like Swift, and endow it with all my fortune, than bestow it on one who thus perverts reason:---hark ye, Sir,---forget the way to this House!---forget you ever saw my face!---would I had never seen your's!---for, if you dare to send her whining to me, I'll torment you with ev'ry plague, power, wealth, law, or even lawyers can set in motion---by heav'n, I abjure the audacious little wretch for ever! and will sooner return to India and bury my gold with those from whom it was taken, than bestow a single shilling on her, when she loses her *coach* and her *house*.

Grey. (*Contemptuously*) And I will sooner want a shilling, than suffer her to waste her youth in a state which will render her age an unsupportable burthen. Fear not, Sir, ever seeing *her* or *me* again; for the bosom which rear'd will joyfully receive her, nor further embitter her remaining days with the knowledge she was born the equal of her undoer; and depriv'd herself of all those blessings heav'n only *hid*, never denied her. [Exit.

Governor alone.

Gov. Who would have a daughter?---zounds! I am as hot as if I was in the black hole at *Calcutta*.---If miss had only married a lout, from ignorance of her birth, I could have forgiven it; but, her puppy be-

ing of fashion, the papers will get hold of it, and I shall be paragraphed into purgatory.---Fools can turn wits on these occasions; and "a certain Governor and his daughter," will set the grinners in motion from Piccadilly to Aldgate.---This insolent old fellow too! ---I need not wonder were she got courage!---not but I like his spirit,---od! I like it much!---it proves his innocence.---What the devil did I drive him away for!---here, dogs! run after that old man in black, and order him to return to me this moment.

Enter Lord Glenmore.

L. Glen. And now brother I am ready for you.

Gov. Yes; and now, brother, I have something else to mind, and my servants, moreover--- [Exit.

L. Glen. What new whim can this troublesome mortal have taken into his head? (*a rapping at the door*) I'm not at home remember--Miss Mortimer!---who's with her?

Miss Mortimer enters, with Cecilia in mourning.

Miss Mor. Nay, as to that circumstance---bless me, here's my Lord!

Cec. My Lord!---good heav'ns, I shall sink into the earth!

M. Mor. He can never guess at you;---recover, my dear creature!

L. Glen. Is the lady indispos'd, Miss Mortimer?

M. Mor. Yes, my Lord;---that is, no---I don't know what I am saying;---she has been ill lately, and riding has a little overcome her; that's all.---(*Aside to Cecilia*)

Cecilia) Struggle to keep up, for heaven's sake and your own.

Cec. Impossible! (*Lord Glenmore draws a ball-chair, in which she faints*).

L. Glen. Warner! drops and water, in a moment.
---How beautiful she is!---her features are exquisitely fine!

M. Mor. They are thought so, my Lord.---Bless me! where can I have crammed my Eau de Luce!---oh, I have it.

L. Glen. Her pulse returns,---she revives.

Cec. I beg your pardon, madam!---my Lord, too!
---I am shock'd to have occasioned so much trouble.

M. Mor. Absurd, to apologize for the infirmity of nature:---my Lord, I do assure you, was quite anxious---

L. Glen. The man must surely have lost every sense, who can see this lady, even when deprived of her's, without emotion:---but to me, the languor of illness had ever something peculiarly interesting.---
(*Aside*) I wonder who this elegant creature is! her hand seems to tremble strangely.

Cec. Oh, madam!---

M. Mor. Silence and recollection alone, can secure you from suspicion;---I confess, I relied on his absence.

Re-enter the Governor.

Gov. He won't return, hey?---od! I like the old Cambrian the better for it:---I have fired his Welch blood finely.---Why, what a blockhead was I, not to

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go after him myself!---methinks, I should like to know miss, when I meet her in her *coach* too,--um--- did he not tell me something of tracing the seducer into this house! (*stands in amazement a moment, then whistles*) *Woodville's* mistress, by every thing contrary! od, I shall seize the gypsy with redoubled satisfaction! but I must keep my own counsel, or my old beau of a brother will roast me to death on my system of education.---Hey! who has he got there? (*Cecilia rises*) a pretty lass, faith!--- ah, *there* is the very thing I admire!---there is gentility, without the fantastical flourishes of fashion!---just the very air I hoped my minx would have had. (*Lord Glenmore, having led off Cecilia, returns*).

L. Glen. I don't know how, but my inclination to this business is over. I think I'll let the matter alone at present.

Gov. The devil you will;---why, by to-morrow, *Woodville* may have married her.

L. Glen. D' ye think so?---well, then let's go.

Gov. And, what d'ye mean to do with her, pray?

L. Glen. (*aside*) I won't trust this weathercock 'till all is safe.---I care not what becomes of her, so she is out of my way;---send her to bridewell, perhaps!

Gov. To Bridewell, truly?---no, that you shan't neither; Bridewell, quotha!---why, who knows but the fault may be all that young Rakehell your son's?

L. Glen. My son's, sir! let me tell you, I have not bred him in such a manner.

Gov.

Gov. Oh, if *breeding* were any security-----zounds, I shall betray all by another word! (*aside*)

L. Glen. What *now* can have changed you?---but you are more inconstant than our climate.---Did you ever know one minute what you shou'd think the next? however, to satisfy your scruples, I intend to dispatch her to a nunnery: and, if that don't please you, e'en take charge of her yourself. [*Exeunt together.*]

Vane comes forward.

Vane. Ha, ha, ha; why, this would make a comedy!---and so, of all birds in the air, his dignified Lordship has pitched on me for the husband of the Governor's daughter and his own niece!---well, if I can but go thro' with this, it will be admirable!---thank'd by one for making my fortune, and safe from the anger of all.

Enter a Servant.

Ser. Mr. Woodville, Sir, is just gone into the house you bid me watch. [*Exit.*]

Vane. The devil he is!---why then I must consign my intended to him for one more night, and persuade my Lord to delay our seizure 'till morning;---for, to meet with him would certainly produce an agreement of all parties, and a marriage which would never enroll my name in the family-pedigree, or governor's will. [*Exit.*]

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SCENE,

SCENE, Cecilia's Dressing-room.

Candles burning, and her Clothes scatter'd.

Enter Woodville.

Thanks to that dear lawyer's lucky absence, I have a few happy hours, my love, to spend with thee——
[*looks at her clothes*] already retired? sure I have not left my key in the garden gate.---No, here it is [*rings the bell and takes off his sword, then throws himself into a chair.*] Nobody answer---I don't understand this.---Perhaps I shall disturb her,---I'll steal into her chamber---[*goes off and presently returns disordered*] not there!---her clothes too, the same she had on last!---oh, my heart misgives me!---but where are all the servants? [*rings very violently, calling at the same time, Bridget! Robert! Jacob!*]

Enter Bridget, with her hat on.

——Bridget! what's become of your Lady?

Brid. Really, Sir, I can't say;——don't you know?

Wood. If I did I shou'd n't have ask'd you.

Brid. (*After a little pause*) Why, sure, Sir, my Lady has not run away? and yet something runs in my head, as if she had.---I thought that spark came for no good to-day.

Wood. What spark, girl?

Brid. Why, just after you went away, comes a young man, a monstrous genteel one and very handsome

some too, I must needs say; with fine dark eyes and a fresh colour.

Wood. Damn his colour! tell me his business.

Brid. So he axed for my Lady, and would not tell *me* what he wanted: I came with her, however, but she no sooner set eyes on him than she sent me out; which argu'd no good, you'll say; and, before I could possibly come back, though I ran as fast as ever my legs could carry me, he was gone, and she writing and crying for dear life;---but that was no news, so I did not mind it: and when she gave me leave to go to the play, thought no more harm than the child unborn.

Wood. It must be a scheme beyond all doubt, and I am the dupe of a dissembling, ungrateful-----oh Cecilia! (*throws himself in a chair*).

Brid. (*Softening her voice and setting her dress*) If I was as you, Sir, I would not fret about her:---there is not a lady in the land would slight a gentleman so handsome and sweet temper'd---I scorn to flatter, for my part.---Inferials must'nt direct their betters: but, had I been in my Lady's place, a King upon his throne would not have tempted me.---Handsome him that handsome does, say I; and I am sure you did handsome by her; for, if she could have eat gold, she might have had it.---He might take some notice truly.

[*Aside.*

Wood. (*Starting up*) Where was she writing?

Brid. In the little drawing-room, Sir.

Exit Woodville.

Bridget

Bridget *alone*.

This ridiculous love turns peoples brains, I think. ---I am sure I said enough to open his eyes:---but, may be, I don't look so handsome, because I am not so fine.---Hey,---a thought strikes me! my Lady is gone, that's plain.---Back she will not come, is as plain. (*Gathers together Cecilia's elegant clothes.*) I'll put on these, and he'll think she gave 'em to me:---then he may find out, I am as pretty as she: if not---he and I are of very different opinions. [*Exit.*]

Re-enter Woodville, more disorder'd.

Wood. Cruel, ungrateful, barbarous girl!---to forsake me in the very moment I was resolving to sacrifice ev'ry thing to her!---but 'tis just.---First dupes to the arts of man, the pupil soon knows how to foil him at his own weapons. Perhaps the discov'ry is fortunate. In a short time, I must have borne the whole disgrace of her ill conduct, and my father's resentment had the bitterest aggravation.---But is she indeed gone? and will continual to-morrows come, without one hope to render them welcome?

Enter Jacob.

Wood. Villain! where's your Lady?

Jac. 'Las a deazy, how can I tell, zur?

Wood. Where are all your fellows?

Jac. Abroad, making halliday.

Wood.

Wood. When did you go out? who gave you
ave?

Jac. My Leady, her own zelf; and I'll tell you
how 'tware.---After dinner I geed her a noate; and,
when zhe had red un, zhe axed me if zo be as how I
had ever zeed the lions? zoa I told her noa; nor no
mour I never did.---Zoa zhe geed me half a crown,
and bid me goa and make myself happy. I thought it
ware desperate koind of her; zoa I went and zeed the
huge creturs; and ater, only stop'd a bit to peap at the
moniment, and hay my fortin tould by Conj'rer in the
Old Bailey; and aw zaid---

Wood. What the devil does it signify to me what he
said?---Hark'e, fir, I see in your face you know more
of your mistress?

Jac. Dang it, then my feace do lye hugely!

Wood. Tell me the whole truth villain! or I'll stab
you to the heart this instant. (*Draws his sword*)

Jac. (*kneels*) I wull, zur, indead I wull: doan't
ye terrify me zo! I do forget ev'ry thing in the whole
world.

Wood. Be sincere, and depend upon my rewarding
you.

Jac. Why, I wish I meay die this maument, if
conj'rer did not zey I should lose my pleace! nay,
aw do verily think aw zaid zomething o'my being put
in fear o' my loife. Loard knaws, I little thought how
zoon his words would come to pass.

Wood. Will you dally?

Jac. Zoa, as I zaid, zur, when I com'd huome
again, I found all the duors aupen, and not a zoul to
be zeed.

Wood.

Wood. (*aside* This fellow can never mean to impose on me, and I must think it a plann'd affair.---While I was in the country, Jacob, did your mistress see much company?

Jac. Cuompany ;--noa, not to speak of,---not gentlewomen.

Wood. Gentlewomen ! blockhead ! why had she any male visitors ?

Jac. Anan !

Wood. I must brain thee at last, booby ! Did any *men* come to see her then ?

Jac. Oh yes, zur, yes---two gentlemen com'd almost ev'ry deay.

Wood. How, *two* gentlemen ? I shall run distracted ! Young, and handsome ?

Jac. Not auver young, zur, nor auver handsome ; but drest mortal foine.

Wood. So they came almost ev'ry day ?--very pretty indeed, Miss Cecilia !---was you never call'd up while they staid ?---did they come together or alone ?

Jac. Aloane.

Wood. I thought as much ; yes, I thought as much. But was you never call'd up, Jacob ?

Jac. Yes, zur, when one aw um ware here one deay, I ware caal'd up for zomething or other.

Wood. Well ? why don't you go on ? I am on the rack !

Jac. Don't ye look so mortal angry then ?

Wood. Well, well, I won't, my good fellow !---there's money for thy honesty.

Jac. Well ;---there aw ware---

Wood. Speak out freely, you can tell me nothing

worse than I imagine; you won't shock me in the least; not at all.

Jac. Well; there aw ware pleaying on that there music-thing like a coffin, and madam ware a zinging to un like any black-bird.

Wood. A music-master---Is that all, booby? (*pushes him down.*)

Jac. Yes; but t'other, zur---

Wood. Aye, I had forgot;---what of him, good Jacob? what of him?

Jac. I ware never caall'd up while aw steay'd; zo (I can't but zeay, I had a curofity to knaw what brought he here) one deay I peap'd thro' the keay-hole, and zeed un---(*titters*)---I shall never forget.

Wood. Tell me what this instant, or I shall burst with rage and suspense.

Jac. Screaping on a little viddle, no bigger than my hand; while madam ware a huolding out her quoats, and dancing all round the room zoa---(*mimicks the minuet aukwardly.*)

Wood. Why, I believe the impudent bumpkin dares to jest with my misery! and yet I have no other avenue: for the rest, I fear, are knaves, and he seems only a fool---and are these all that came, Jacob?

Jac. Noa, there were one moare, zur; a leetle mon in a black quoad,---but he only com'd now and tan.

Wood. A disguise, no doubt? Yes, yes, they were artful enough.

Jac. And zoa, ater he had done wi' my Leady, aw did shut his self up wi' Bridget; and zoa I axed

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her all about un, and zhe zaid as how aw com'd to teach madam to turn themmin great round balls all blue, and red, and yellow, that do stand by the books, and learned she to wroite.

Wood. Yes, yes, Mrs. Bridget was in all her secrets, I don't doubt. If that fellow in black comes here again, keep him, if you value your life, and send for me. I know not what to do or think, and must renew my search, tho' hopeless of success. [*Exit.*

Jacob alone.

Jac. Dang it! but he's in a desperate teaking!--- Rabbit me, but I ware muortally afeard aw un too, for aw flourish'd his zword as yeazy as I could a cudgel:---I do think conj'urer might as well ha tuold me madam would ha' run away, while aw ware about it, and then I moight ha' run away furst. [*Exit.*

Enter Grey.

Grey. At length I have gained entrance into this house of shame, which now, alas! contains my darling Cecilia,---plung'd in vice, and lost to every sentiment, I spent so many anxious years in implanting, This does not seem to be the abode of pleasure, nor have I met a single being.

Wood,

Woodville entering behind, sees Grey, and drawing his sword, flies at and seizes him.

Wood. Ha! a man! and in black, as Jacob said! Villain, this moment is your last.

Grey. (*turning suddenly upon him*) Yes, young seducer, add to the daughter's ruin the father's murder! Stab my heart, as you already have my happiness.

Wood. Alas, was *this* her visitor? I dare not speak to him!

Grey. Embosomed by affluence, exalted by title, peace still shall be far from thy heart; for thou, with the worst kind of avarice, hast by specious pretences wrested from poverty its last dear possession,---virtue.

Wood. Pierced to the soul, as I am by your reproaches, I dare appeal to Cecilia herself for a testimony of my contrition! How shall I convince you?

Grey. Hardly by a life of repentance. But I debase myself to exchange a word with you. Give me back my Cecilia!---Ruin'd as she is, I yet would recover her:---give her back then to a father you first taught her to fear, and an habitation, too humble for any but the good to be happy in.

Wood. Alas, Sir! can you trifle with my misery? do *you* give her back to the wretch who cannot survive her loss!---let me owe her hand to your bounty, tho' her heart to her own!---did you know what this elopement of her's has cost me---

Grey. Oh, most accomplish'd villain!---but think not to dupe *me* too.

Wood. Who but you can have robb'd me of her since morning?

Grey. Shallow artifice!

Wood. Hear me, Sir! and even believe me, when I solemnly swear I have deeply repented my crime, and offer'd her all the reparation in my power;---but, since then----

Grey. What since then?

Wood. Either by your means, or some other, she has fled!

Grey. Impossible.

Wood. 'Tis too true, by heav'n!

Grey. Perhaps, while you are thus ingeniously deluding me, she *indeed* flies---Study some other deception, while I examine the whole house, for nothing else can convince me. [Exit.

Woodville alone.

Surely this injur'd venerable man was sent by heav'n to complete my misfortunes!---my passions subside, but only into a vague horror and despondency, even more dreadful:---if with rash hand she has shorten'd her days, what remain of mine will be, indeed, all her father predicts! (*walking by the toilette*) ha, a letter!

Re-enter Grey.

Grey. A total loneliness in the house!

Wood. Now, sir, be convinc'd;---I have just found a letter from her.

Grey.

Grey. This cannot be the invention of a moment:
---let me read it---it is, indeed, her hand. (*Opens and reads it*)

“Receive this as my last farewell.—Providence
“has unexpectedly sent me a friend, whose protection
“I dare accept; and time may perhaps subdue a passion,
“which seems interwoven with my being.—Forget
“me, I intreat; and seek that happiness with another,
“I can never hope to bestow or partake.—Consoled
“only by reflecting, that the grief, my error occasions,
“is inferior to that I should have felt, had I, by an
“ungenerous use of my power, made you, in turn,
“my victim.—Once more, adieu!—all search
“will certainly be fruitless.”

P. S. “In the cabinet you will find your valuable presents; and the key is in a dressing-box.”

(*Woodville snatches the letter and bursts into tears*)

Grey. Cecilia! I may say, with tears of joy, thou art, indeed, my daughter! more dear (if possible) than ever! a daughter monarchs might contend for, though thy weak father abjures thee!—may the friend you have found have a heart but like your own! for you, young man!—but I leave you to your anguish; the loss of *such* a woman is a sufficient punishment.

Wood. Stay, sir! (*rises*) by your holy profession, I conjure you, stay!--plunge me not into total despair!--though without a clue to her asylum, I would fain believe my heart will lead me to it; and let me then hope you will bestow her on me?

Grey.

Grey. There is a something in your manner, young gentleman, that affects me ;----I have been young, wild, and extravagant myself ; and what is more strange, have not forgot I was so : my own experience proves reformation possible : act up to her and atone your error.

Wood. I will endeavour it, sir ! and, oh could those who yet but waver, know what has passed in my heart, during the last hour, who would dare to deviate ?

[*Exeunt.*

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

SCENE, Cecilia's House.

Bridget dressed in Cecilia's Clothes, mixed with every thing vulgar and tawdry.

Brid. SO,---I am ready against our gentleman comes.---Deuce on him to run away last night, the moment I was drest---and with an inferial fellow too! ---Lard, how can people of quality demean themselves by keeping company with inferials!---however, one thing I am sure of, he's too much on the fidgets to stay long away from our house; and in the mean while, I can entertain myself extremely well. (*Sits down to the toilette*)

Fac. (*Without*) I tell ye, my lady's not at home.

Gov. I tell *you*, I won't take your word for it;---so come, my Lord, and see.

Brid. Heyday, my Lord!---what's the news now, I wonder?

Enter Lord Glenmore and the Governor; both stop short.

Gov. Oh, I thought madam had learnt enough of the ton to lye by proxy.

Brid.

Brid. Dear heart!---I am all of a twitteration!---who can these be?---that's my Lord, for certain!

L. Glen. The vulgarity of the wench is astonishing!

Gov. ---Um---why, a little gawky, or so,---there's no denying it.---(*aside*) Here's a pretty discovery, now, after all my projects!---thank fortune, the secret is yet my own though.

L. Glen. (*Advancing to her*) I ought to beg your excuse, madam, for so abrupt an intrusion; but the opportunity and so fair a temptation will, I flatter myself, be a sufficient apology.

Brid. (*aside*) He takes me for my lady, that's a sure thing!---oh, this is charming!---you need not make no 'pology's, my Lord;---inferials never knows how to suspect people of quality; but I understands good breeding better.

L. Glen. (*aside*) Why, what a Barn-door Mawkin it is! your politeness, madam, can only be equalled by your beauty.

Brid. Dear heart, my Lord, you flatter me!---won't you please to sit? (*waits affectedly 'till they consent to seat themselves*)

L. Glen. (*to the Governor*) Surely by using my title, she knows me.

Gov. Zounds, I have a great mind to make her know me;---od, I shall never be able to contain.

L. Glen. I was afraid, madam, I should prove an unwelcome guest;---but beauty like yours---

Brid. Does your Lordship think I so very handsome,

some then?---Lord, how lucky was my dressing myself!

L. Glen. (Aside) Affected idiot! I was afraid, madam, too of meeting Woodville here---(*aside*) I know not what to say to her.

Brid. He has not been here this morning; but, if he had, he knows better than to ask after my company, I do assure you, my---Lordship.

L. Glen. I have been told he intends marrying you; what a pity to monopolize such merit!

Brid. If he has any such kind intention, 'tis more than I know of, I assure you.

L. Glen. His keeping that wise resolution from you, is some little comfort, however.

Brid. But, I promise ye, I shall make a rare person of quality; for I loves cards, coaches, dancing, and dress, to my very heart;---nothing in the world better---but blindman's-buff. I had some thoughts of taking a trip to Sadler's Wells or Fox Hall, but they don't begin 'till five o'clock.

Gov. (Aside) Ha! ha! tho' she can hardly spell out the Ten Commandments, she could break every one with as much ease and impudence, as if she had been bred in the circle of St. James's.

L. Glen. But, madam, you know, allowing Woodville willing to marry you, it is not in his power while his father lives, without forfeiting his fortune, the value of which you doubtless understand?

Brid. Oh yes, yes, for sartain, my Lord.

L. Glen. Who knows too, how far an incensed parent may carry his resentment! he might find means to entrap and punish you.

K

Brid.

Brid. Ha, ha, ha!---he entrap me!---that *would* be a good jest!---no, no, I have more of the lady of quality than to be so easily caught.

Gov. (*mimicking her*) He, he, he! that is the only particular in which you have nothing at all of the lady of quality.

L. Glen. With me you may share a higher rank and larger fortune without those fears---I am of an age---

Brid. Yes, one may see that without being a conjuror---why, will you marry me, my Lord?

L. Glen. Convince me that you don't love this Woodville, and I know not how far my passion may carry me.

Brid. Love him? do you think I knows no more of high life than that comes to? To be sure, he is a sweet pretty man, and all that;---but, as to love, I loves nobody half so well as myself.

L. Glen. Upon my soul, I believe you; and wish he had the whole benefit of the declaration: [*To the Governor*] her ingratitude is as shocking as her ignorance, and Bridewell too gentle a punishment.

Gov. Then build a bridewell large enough to contain the whole sex; for the only difference between her and the rest is,---this Country Mawkin *tells* what the Town-bred Misses *conceal*.

L. Glen. Why, Governor, you are as testy as if you had the care of *her* education.

Gov. I the care?---zounds, what I say is merely from friendship to your Lordship.---I hate to see you deceive yourself.---(*aside*) Surely he can never suspect! (*Bridget is employed in cramming trinkets from the dressing-table into her pockets.*)

Brid. Now I am ready to go, my Lord.

L. Glen. Reflect, madam! it would hurt me to have you say I deceiv'd you---if you should repent---I am much afraid you will.

Brid. What, when I am a lady? Oh, I'll venture that, and attend you.

Gov. (*roughly snatching her other hand*) To where you little dream of, you vain, affected, presuming, ignorant baggage!

Brid. Hey-day!--my Lord?

L. Glen. Appeal not to me, base woman!--know I am the father of that poor Dupe, Woodville.

Brid. Dear heart! be ye indeed? What will become of me then?

L. Glen. And, as a moderate punishment for your hypocrisy, ambition, and ingratitude, sentence you to be shut up for life in a monastery.

Brid. O Lord! among monsters?

Gov. No, Ignoramus!--no; among nuns: tho' they are but monsters in human nature either.

Brid. What, where they'll cut off my hair, and make me wear sackcloth next to my skin?

Gov. Yes, if they leave you any skin at all.

Brid. Oh dear, dear, dear! (*sobs and groans*) upon my bended knees, I do beg you won't send me there!--why I shall go mallancholly-- I shall make away with myself for certain; and my ghost will appear to you all in white.

Gov. All in black, I rather think; for the devil a speck of white is there in your whole composition.

L. Glen. Your conduct, wretch! justifies a severer sentence--- to seduce him from his duty, was crime enough.

Brid. Who, I seduce him? I did not, my Lord--- indeed I did not.

L. Glen. Have you not own'd---

Brid. No, indeed, no; that I wish'd to take my Lady's place, I believe I did own:---

Gov. Ha, ha, ha! very prettily devis'd, faith, for a young beginner!---come, come, (*chucking her under the chin*) we must give you credit for this, Miss---your Lady? ha, ha,---ha!

L. Glen. Shallow subterfuge!

Enter Vane and the slaves.

Vane, is all ready?---seize this woman, and observe my orders!

Brid. Ah dear heart! I shall die away if the blacks do but touch me---indeed you do mistake!---I be no lady---I be only Bridget.

Gov. I would give ten thousand pounds that you were only Bridget, you artful puffs!---Zounds, tho' I could one moment strangle the pug's face in her own necklace, yet the next I can hardly prevail on myself to punish her---what the devil had I *now* to do in England? or what the devil had I *ever* to do in Wales?---Phew! I could dethrone fifty Nabobs without half the fatigue and anxiety of this moment.---Take her away, however! and let us try how Miss likes riding out in her *own coach*.

[Vane and the Slaves seize her; she screams out and catches Lord Glenmore's coat, falling on her knees.---Jacob enters, her back to him.]

Jac.

Jac. Why, what a dickens be ye all at here?---
Zoa, what's my Leady there?

L. Glen. See there now,---Oh the artful Jezebel!

Brid. Oh, Jacob! Why don't ye see I am Bridget?---Pray satisfy my Lord here.

Jac. Why, be ye Bridget?---Never trust me else!

Gov. Here a fool of t'other sex now, can hardly take a hint though so plainly given him!---Thanks to the natural difference, for art is nature in woman.

---(*L. Glen. draws him aside*)

Jac. Auh Bridget, Bridget! Where didst thee get thee sum foine claws?---Noa, noa, as theest brew'd, thee meayst beake.

Brid. Oh, do ye take pity on me!---Why they be going to carry me to some outlandish place, and make a nunnery of me!

Jac. A nunnery? what's that? any thing Christin? well, if I do spake to um, will ye hae me?

Brid. Oh, yes, yes, yes!

L. Glen. Brother! I shall leave you to the completion of this affair; I am sick to the soul of the gawky---

Gov. Yes, yes; I don't doubt it,---I don't doubt it.

L. Glen. (*To Vane.*) Convey her to my house, and lock her up in one of the lofts over the stables;---go the backway, and even the family need know nothing of the matter. The Chaplain will provide a licence, and be ready---Courage, my lad, and depend upon my gratitude!

[*Exit.*

Gov.

Gov. Will you take her, or no?---I shall never be able to stifle my agitation; and burst with rage if I shew it.---

Jac. Why, zure, zure, ye won't carr' away our Bridget?

Vane. Ha, ha, ha!

Gov. Oh, she *has* beat her meaning into thy thick scull at last?--Pr'ythee, keep thy block-head out of my way, if thou mean'st to keep it on thy own shoulders.

Jac. Why, be ye in arnest then? dear heart alive! why this is cousin Bridget!

Brid. Only send for Mr. Woodville.

Gov. Prettily devis'd again! ha, ha, ha! dost think, my little dear! we have lived three times as long as your Ladyship to learn a quarter as much?---Send for Mr. Woodville, hey?---No, no; you won't find us quite so simple.

Jac. Oh doan't ye, doan't ye, carr' off zhe, or if ye wull, do pray take I.

Vane. Yes, you would be a choice piece of lumber truly.

Gov. Drag her away this moment.

Brid. Oh dear, oh dear! to be hanged at last for another's crime is all that vexes me.

[*They carry her off, Governor follows.*]

S C E N E, *Miss Mortimer's Apartment.*

Cecilia enters, and sits down to embroidery.

How fond, how weak, how ungrateful, are our hearts!--mine still will presumptuously fancy this house its home, and ally itself to ev'ry one to whom Woodville is dear.

Lord

Lord Glenmore enters.

Cec. Oh heaven's, my Lord!--how unlucky!--if I go, he may find the Captain with Miss Mortimer.

L. Glen. You see, madam, you have only to retire to engage us to pursue you, even to rudeness.---But, tell me, can it be your own choice to punish us so far as to prefer solitude to our society?

Cec. I know myself too well, my Lord, to receive distinctions of which I am unworthy;---yet think not, therefore, I fail in respect.

L. Glen. But, is that charming bosom susceptible of nothing beyond respect? why is it capable of inspiring a passion it cannot participate?

Cec. Your goodness, my Lord---my profound veneration, will always attend you---but, the more generously you are inclined to forget what is due to yourself, the more strongly it is impressed on my memory.

L. Glen. Were what you say true, the bounties of nature atone amply to you for the parsimony of fortune; nor would your want of every other advantage lessen your merit, or my sense of it.

Cec. (*aside*) Had he thought thus a few months since, how happy had I now been!--Your approbation at once flatters and serves me, by justifying Miss Mortimer's protection of me.

L. Glen. Her partiality for you, does her more honour than it can ever do you advantage. But, you must tell me, how she gain'd first the happiness of knowing you?

Cec.

Cec. My---my Lord, by a misfortune so touching---

L. Glen. Nay, I would not distress you neither ; yet, I own, madam, I wish to make a proposal worth a serious answer ; but ought first to know, why you affect a mystery ? Tell me then, my dear, ev'ry incident of your life, and I will raise you to a title, I may without vanity say, many have aspired to !

Cec. You oppress my very soul, my Lord ! But, alas ! unconquerable obstacles deprive me for ever of that title. Neither *would* I obtain it by alienating such a son from such a father.

L. Glen. Put him entirely out of the question ; the meanness of his conduct acquits me to myself. Do you know, madam, he has resolved to marry a creature of low birth, illiterate, vulgar, and impudent ? and, to complete her perfections, she has been *his* mistress at least.

Cec. Surely he knows, and purposely shocks me thus. (*Aside.*)

L. Glen. But your integrity doesn't render you less amiable in my eyes ; it greatly enhances every other merit. As to his wretch, I have her in my power, and shall make her dearly repent.

Cec. Then I am lost indeed ! (*aside*) You have, my Lord ; tho' I know not how, discovered.----(*Rises in confusion.*)

L. Glen. (*rises, taking snuff, without looking at her*) Oh, nothing more easy, madam ; I had him carefully traced to her house ; and, during his absence, took servants and forced her away.

Cec. (*aside*) That, however, cannot be me ; every word seems to add to a mystery I dare not enquire into.

L. Glen.

L. Glen. But why waste one precious moment on such an animal? what are these unconquerable obstacles?

Cec. Spare me, my Lord; your indulgence induces me to try again to soften your resolutions respecting your son: deprived of the weak, the guilty, the miserable wretch you justly condemn, a little time will (no doubt) incline him to his duty. I should have your pardon to solicit, my Lord, but that your own openness authorizes mine.

L. Glen. But, can you, who so powerfully plead the cause of another, be deaf to the sighs of a man who adores you? who offers you a rank---

Cec. Be satisfied, my Lord, with knowing I have all that esteem your merit claims; which influences me beyond every casual advantage.

L. Glen. But, madam---

Cec. Alas! my Lord!---(*bursts into tears aside*)--- Be silent, if possible, both pride and virtue. I have deserved, and will submit to it---yet surely the bitterness of this moment expiates all past offences. [*Exit.*

L. Glen. Amiable creature! what an amazing elegance of mind and person! Tears were her only answers to my questions, and blushes to my looks: yet these only heighten a curiosity they have softened into love. [*Exit.*

Woodville's Apartment.

Woodville alone.

Wood. No intelligence of my Cecilia yet!---were I only assured of her safety, it would be some consolation.

L

Enter

Enter Jacob.

Jac. Zur, Zur!---I do maeke so bowld as to ax to spake to you.

Wood. Jacob! my honest fellow, the very sight of thee revives my hopes, and sets my heart in motion!---well, what's the news?

Jac. Zurprizing news indeed, zur!---Loord, I thought I should never meat wi'ye;---I com'd to your lodgings twice, and ye warn't up.

Wood. Up! 'sdeath, you ignorant booby! why didn't you order them to rouse me that moment?

Jac. Loord, zur! why your gentleman (as they do caal un) were so terrable foine, I were afeard of affronting un!

Wood. Plague on the stupidity of both, say I!---But what's all this to the purpose? the news? the news?

Jac. Las-a-deazy! mourtal bad news, indeed!---

Wood. You tedious blockhead! is your lady return'd?

Jac. Noa, Zur. (*Shaking his head very mournfully.*)

Wood. (*aside*) The horrid forebodings of my heart recur; yet, surely she could not be so desperate!---shocking as the suspense is, I more dread the certainty.---Speak, however, my good fellow! (*Jacob wipes his eyes*)---I shall ever value your sensibility.---Tell me then the simple truth, whatever it may be?---

Jac. I wull, Zur, I wull.---There has com'd two foine gentlemen, wi zwords by their zides, just for all the world like yourn.

Wood.

Wood. Well, and what did these gentlemen say?

Jac. Why, they went up steers, willy nilly, and carr'd off----- our Bridget. (*Bursts out a crying.*)

Wood. You impudent, ignorant clown! I'll give you cause for your tears. (*Shakes him.*)

Jac. Loord! Loord!--do ye ha a little Christin commiseration---well, if I ever do coume nigh ye again, I do wish ye may break every buone in my zkin.

Wood. (*Walking about in a rage*) To insult me with your own paltry love affairs! these great and mighty gentlemen were only constables I dare swear, and your fears converted their staves to swords.

Jac. Ay, but that an't the worst neither. I do verily think my turn wull cuome next;---can't zleep in my bed for thinking on't, nor enjoy a meal's meat: ---zo, except you do bring your zword, and coume and live in our houze, I wull guo out on't, that's a zure thing; for I had rather sceare craws at a graat a deay all my loife long, than bide there to be so terrified.

Wood. Sceare craws truly? why the craws will sceare you, ye hen-hearted puppy!--there, teake that, (*gives him money*) and guo huome, or to the devil, so you never fall in my way again.

Jac. Zome faulk that I do knaw wull zee the black gentleman first, 'tis my belief---zoa I had best keep out o' his woiy too.

Enter Harcourt.

Har. Woodville, what's the matter? why you will raise the neighbourhood.

Jacob returns.

Jac. Here's a peaper housemaid do zend you, wi' her humble duty; but, if zo be it do put ye in another desperate teaking, I do huope ye wull zend for zhe to beat, and not I.---Loord! Loord! what wull becuome of me in this woide world of London!

[*Exit Jacob.*]

Har. Ha! ha! ha! he is a choice fellow!

Wood. A heart, oppressed with its own feelings, fears ev'ry thing. I have hardly courage to open a letter without an address.

Har. Come, come, give it me then. Hey, what? confusion!---was ever any thing so unlucky? (*attempts to tear it.*)

Wood. (*snatches it from him*) Ha! it is important then?

Har. Why will you invent torments for yourself? (*aside*)---My own letter by ev'ry thing careless---here's a stroke----

Wood. (*reads in a broken voice and manner*) "Woodville on the brink of marriage---you will be disengaged---a nobleman---(damnation!)---heart and fortune at her feet"---(I'll let his soul out there) hell and furies!---but I will find him, if money---never will I close my eyes till---Oh Cecilia---(*throws himself into a seat.*)

Har. This is the most unforeseen---I know not what to say to him---prythee, Woodville! do not sacrifice so many reasonable presumptions in her favour, to a paper that may be a forgery, for aught you know!

Wood.

Wood. Oh Charles! that I could think so!---but I have seen the villain's execrable hand somewhere! Did you never see the hand?

Har. Um---I can't but own I have,---what the devil shall I say to him---(*Aside.*)

Enter the Governor.

Gov. Woodville, my dear boy! I am come to have a little talk with thee.---Charles! don't run away!---you are in all your cousin's secrets.

Wood. What should possess this tiresome mortal to come here?---I should have waited on *you*, in half an hour, Sir.

Gov. Ay, and that's what I wanted to avoid:---The more I talk to your father, Frank, the more I find him fixed on the match with his Miss Mortimer! Nay, he tells me, he will have you married this very day.

Wood. That's mighty probable in the humour I am in.

Gov. Ah, Frank! the girl I offer thee---

Wood. Is no more agreeable to me than her you despise.

Gov. How do you know that, peppercorn?---how do you know that?---od, I could tell you---

Wood. And, to tell you my full mind, Sir, I had rather make myself miserable to gratify my father, than any other man.

Gov. Od! thou art so obstinate, boy, I can't help loving thee.---(*Aside*) I don't see why I am obliged
to

to know his Miss is my daughter—I have a great mind to own what we have done with her; and, if he will marry, e'en take care nobody hinders him! then, trump up a farce about forgiving them;—and yet, it goes against my conscience to punish the puppy for life, though he has punished me pretty sufficiently, by the Lord Harry.

Har. I don't like this affair at all, and tremble for my Sophia, when I see this odd soul so inveterate against her.

Gov. (*to Woodville*) Well, my lad! do you know I am as deep in all your secrets as your favourite valet de chambre?

Wood. I don't understand you, Sir.

Gov. Pho, pho, pho! keep that face till I shew thee one as solemn as my Lord's. Why should not you please yourself, and marry *your* Miss, instead of your father's?

Both. Astonishing!

Gov. Od, if you turn out the honest fellow I take you for, I know a pretty round sum, an onion and a black coat may one day or other entitle you to; so never mind Lord Gravity's resentment.

Wood. I act from better motives, Sir, and were unworthy your wealth could it tempt me to disobey the best of fathers.

Gov. (*passionately*) Why then, marry Miss Mortimer, and oblige him: take a back seat in your own coach, get a family of pale-faced brats, born with ostrich feathers on their heads; and hate away a long life with all due decorum!—Zounds, here's a fellow
more

more whimsical than---even myself.---Yesterday you would have the pufs spite of every body; but, you no sooner find it in your power to oblige your best friend, by humouring your inclinations, than, lo! you are taken with a most violent fit of duty and submission!---Od, you don't know what you have lost by it!---but, since you are bent on crossing me, I'll cross you, and once for all too---My secret shall henceforth be as impenetrable as the philosopher's stone.---Ay, stare as you please, I'll give you more years than you have yet seen days to guess it in. [Exit.

Har. What this uncle of ours can mean is quite beyond my guess!

Wood. What signifies seeking to expound by reason, actions in which it had no share?---his brain is indubitably touched! but Cecilia lies heavy on my heart, and excludes ev'ry other thought.

Har. Time may explain the secret of that letter, which, I will lay my life, she despises:---a woman who did not, would have kept it from your hands.

Wood. That's true, indeed!--- if I wrong her, and this was but an insult,---there is a noble sincerity in her own letter which sets suspicion at defiance.---If he stumbled on one word of truth during this visit, the crisis of my fate approaches.---Oh, wherever thou art, if the exalted being I will still hope my Cecilia, thou shalt know I have at least deserv'd thee! [Exeunt,

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

A C T

V C T V.

SCENE, *A mean Room; Boots, Bridles, &c. hanging all round.*

Bridget sitting very mournfully, her fine Clothes in great Disorder;---a Table by her, with a small Roll, a Glass of Water, an old dog's-eared Book, and a Bit of Looking-glass.

Brid. **D**E A R heart! dear heart! what a miserable time have I pass'd! and, where I be to pass my whole life, my Lord here only knows!--I have not much stomach indeed; neither have I much breakfast. (*Eats a bit of bread and bursts into tears.*)

Enter the Governor.

Gov. Had I more sins to answer for than a college of Jesuits, I surely expiate them all, by going through a purgatory in this life beyond what they have invented for the other.--This vulgar Maux of mine haunts my imagination, in every shape but that I hoped to see her in; I dare hardly trust myself to speak to her!--od, I would not have the extirpation of the whole female sex depend upon my casting-yote while I am in this humour.

Brid. Mercy on me! here's that cross old gentleman again! what will become of me?---do, pray, strange sir! be so generous as to tell me what is next to be done with me?

Gov. Why, just whatever I please, you audacious baggage!---(*Aside*) od, now I think on't, I have a great mind to try a few soft words, and dive into all the secrets of the little ignoramus.---Come, suppose I had a mind to grant you your freedom, how would you requite me?

Brid. Dear heart! why I'd love you for ever and ever.

Gov. 'dzounds, that's a favor I could very readily dispense with;---and yet 'tis natural to the poor wench:---Ah! if thou had'st been a good girl, thou had'st been a happy one.--Hark'ye, miss! confess all your sins, that's the only way to escape, I promise you! and, if you conceal the least, I'll-----do, I don't know what I'll do to you.

Brid. I will; I will, sir, indeed, as I hope to be married.

Gov. Married, you slut! bad as that is, it's too good for you:---come, tell me all your adventurers? ---describe the behaviour of the young villain who seduced you;---where did you see him first?

Brid. Ugh, ugh,---At church, sir.

Gov. At church, quotha?---a pretty place to commence an intrigue in!---and how long was it before you came to this admirable agreement?

Brid. Umh?---why--Sunday was Midsummer-eve, ---and Sunday ater was madam's wedding-day,---and Monday was our fair, and---

M

Gov.

Gov. Oh, curse your long histories!---and, what then said Woodville?

Brid. Oh Lord, nothing at all---why, it warn't he.---

Gov. No!---(*ready to burst with passion*) Who, who, who? tell me that, and quite distract me!

Brid. Timothy Hobbs, Squire's gardener.

Gov. an absolute clown--- (*walks about half groaning with rage and disappointment*) who, oh! who would be a father?--I could laugh,---cry,---die,---with shame and anger!---since the man, who corrupted, left her only one virtue, would he had deprived her of that too!---oh, that she had but skill enough to lye well!

Brid. Whether I can or no, I'll never speak truth again, that's a sure thing!---what do I get by it, or any poor souls of the female kind?

Gov. I am incapable of thinking;---ev'ry plan, ev'ry resource thus overturn'd;---I must be wiser than all the world?---This fool's head of mine must take to teaching truly! as if I could eradicate the stamp of nature, or regulate the senses, by any thing but reason---don't pipe, baggage! to me;---you all can do that, when too late:---when I have considered whether I shall hang myself or not, I'll let you know whether I shall tuck you up along with me, you little wretch, you!

Exit.

Bridget alone.

Brid. Well, sure I have at last guess'd where I am shut up!---it must be Bedlam; for the old gentleman is out of his mind, that's a sure thing!

Enter

Enter Vane.

Van. Ha, ha, ha! my future father-in-law seems to have got a quietus of my intended; and, faith, so wou'd any man who was not in love with a certain forty thousand;---to be sure, in plain English, she is a glorious mawkin!---(*to her*)---well, madam, how are you pleas'd with your present mode of living?

Brid. Living, do you call it?---I think, 'tis only starving.---Why, I shall eat my way through the walls very shortly.

Van. Faith, Miss, they use you but so so, that's the truth on't; and I must repeat, even to your face, what I said to my Lord, that your youth, beauty and accomplishments, deserve a better fate.

Brid. Dear heart! Bedlam, did I say, I was in! why, I never knew a more sensibler, genteeler prettier sort of a man in my life. (*aside*)---I am sure, Sir, if I was to study seven years, I shou'd never know what I have done to discommode them, not I.

Van. Oh Lard, my dear! only what is done ev'ry day by half your sex without punishment---however, you are to suffer for all, it seems?---you see your fare for life!--- a dungeon, coarse rags, and the same handsome allowance of bread and water twice a day.

Brid. Oh, dear me!---why I shall be an otomy in a week!

Van. And an old black to guard you, more sulky and hideous, than those in the Arabian Night's Entertainments.

M 2

Brid.

Brid. Why, sure they will let you come and see me, Sir? I shall certainly frown away, every time I look at that nasty old black.

Van. This is the last time your dungeon (which your presence renders a palace to me) will ever be open to one visitor—unless---unless---I cou'd contrive---but no, it would be my ruin: yet who wou'dnt venture something for such a charming creature? you could endear even ruin.---Tell me, then, what reward you would bestow on a man who ventur'd all to give you freedom?

Brid. Nay, I don't know; you're such a dear sweet soul, I shan't stand with you for a trifle.

Van. Ahey! Miss will be as much too complying in a minute.---Well, then, my dear! I must marry you, or you will still be in the power of your enemies.

Brid. Hey?---what? do I hear rightly? marry me? ---(*aside*)---why, this will be the luckiest day's work I ever did!---nay, Sir, if you should be so generous, I hope I shall live to make you amends!

Van. (*aside*) The only amends you can make me, is by dying---and now, my dear! I will own to you, I have the license in my pocket; and my Lord, as eager as myself.---Our chaplain will do us the favour with more expedition than he says grace before meat!---Well done, Vane! egad, thy lucky star predominates! ---(*Aside---takes her arm*)

Brid. Surely my locking up does end very comical.

[*Exeunt arm in arm.*

SCENE,

S C E N E,---*The drawing room.**Miss Mortimer and Captain Harcourt.*

M. Mor. Woodville is now with his father, and both in the decisive mood.---Oh, Charles! as the moment approaches nearer, your influence becomes insensibly less powerful:---the frantic fits of the Governor; the solemn absurdity of my Lord---but, above all, the behaviour of Woodville, hurts and alarms me!---still cautious not to offend his father, he has tried ev'ry way to extort the refusal from me; but, by a pardonable equivocation, I left him hopeless, and assured him I should, to the utmost of my power, obey my benefactor.---Why, why did you marry one, who could give you nothing but her heart?

Har. I shall not answer, till you can name me an equivalent---trust to my management, my dear Sophia.---I still flatter myself, one storm will settle the tenor of our lives---if not; while acquitted to Heav'n, the world, and ourselves, we may struggle with spirit against fortune; and sometimes owe our dearest enjoyments to her fluctuations.

M. Mor. By sentiments like these you won my very soul; and to retain for ever a heart so invaluable, I have ventur'd the displeasure of my benefactor: but our hearts will not always follow the lead of our reason, nor, when I consider the cause, can I repent the deviation of mine.

Har.

Har. Think, if you pity yourself, what you can give to Cecilia; and fortify her mind against too strong a sense of her frailty. For my part, I must watch whatever is going on.

M. Mor. So you leave me out of the plot?---well, if it ends happily, I shall be contented; and, like the world, measuring your merit by your success, will declare you a most inimitable schemer.---Adieu!

Har. Nay, stay a moment!

M. Mor. Not for the world; for here comes your uncle, with a face more petrifying than Medusa's.
[Exit.

Enter the Governor, musing.

Gov. I have lived fifty eight years, five months, and certain odd days, to find out I am a fool at last; but I will live as many more, before I add the discovery that I am a knave too.

Har. What the devil can he be now hatching? ---mischief, I fear?

Gov. Dear fortune! let me escape this once undiscover'd, and I compound for all the rest.---Charles! the news of the house? for the politics of this family are employment for ev'ry individual in it.

Har. Bella, horrida bella, Sir!---my Lord is determined to bring his son's duty to an immediate test,---(aside) thanks to his friend's schemes and his mistress's beauty.

Gov. What poor malicious wretches are we by nature!----Zounds, if I could not find in my heart to rejoice

rejoice at thinking every one here will be as mortified and disappointed as a certain person that shall be nameless.---So, so; here they come, faith, to argue the point in open court.

Enter Lord Glenmore followed by Woodville.

L. Glen. Without this proof of your obedience, all you can urge, Sir, is ineffectual.

Wood. While obedience was possible, I never swerv'd, my Lord; but, when you command me to make myself wretched, a superior duty cancels that:—already bound by a voluntary, an everlasting vow, I cannot break it without offending heav'n, nor keep it without offending you.

Gov. (aside) What's this? chop'd about again!

Wood. Did you once know the incomparable merits of my love, even your Lordship's prejudices must give way to your reason.

L. Glen. Mere dotage.---Doesn't her conduct equally evince her folly and depravity?

Wood. Cover'd as I ought to be, with confusion and remorse; I will own she was seduced and deceiv'd.

Gov. (aside) Ah, poor boy!--one of the two was woefully deceiv'd sure enough.

L. Glen. Oh, your conscience may be very easy on that account; it could not require much art to deceive such an ideot.

Gov. No, no, my Lord; why paint the devil blacker than he is? not an ideot neither.

Wood.

Wood. Sir, my father's freedom of speech I must endure;—but yours---

Gov. You must endure too, young Sir, or I shall bite my tongue off.

Wood. But, my Lord! that dear unhappy girl is no longer a subject of debate,---she evidently proves her merit by her flight.

L. Glen. Would you make a virtue from not doing ill, when it is no longer in your power?---Woodville! I was once weak enough to believe indulgence the surest way of obtaining your duty and esteem.---My eyes are at last opened,---Miss Mortimer is worthy a better husband; but you are her's or no son of mine.---I solemnly promised this to her dying father, and will acquit myself at all events.

Wood. Can you resolve to sacrifice me to a promise made before we could judge of each other?---You never felt, Sir, the compulsion you practice;---will you dissolve the first band of morality, and see your highly-estimated title end in me? for never will I on these terms continue it.

L. Glen. I almost wish *I* never had continued it.--
(*Walks in anger.*) I am determined, Woodville! and nothing but Miss Mortimer's refusal can break the match.

Wood. I shall not put that in her power, my Lord: Permit me to tell you, no son was ever more sensible of a father's kindness: but, if I can purchase its continuance only with my honour and my happiness, it would be too dearly bought.

L. Glen. 'Tis well, fir.—I have listened to you sufficiently. Now hear ME. Know, this worthless wretch, you prefer to your duty, is in my power; nay, in this house.

Har. (*aside*) The devil she is! how in the name of ill-luck should he find that out?---my fine scheme entirely blown up, by Jupiter!

Wood. Why play thus upon me, my Lord?---her letter---

L. Glen. What, has she wrote to you?---that I was not aware of, nor indeed suspected she could write.

Gov. No, not so ignorant as that neither. I order'd she should write too!

L. Glen. You order'd she should write?---let me tell you, fir, it was wronging my confidence!

Gov. No, I did *not* order she should write;---I mean,---I mean,---zounds! I don't know what I mean!

Wood. So it seems, indeed, since hardly half an hour ago my uncle himself persuaded me to marry my love.

Gov. Here's a cursed affair now.

L. Glen. Can't this be possible? Let me tell you, Governor, if presuming upon your wealth, you play a double part in my family---

Gov. Zounds! nobody knows his *own* part in your family, that I see! and this fellow, too, to teize me, whom I lov'd above all in it. Why, I spoke entirely from regard to him. If, since then I have discovered

N

a bumpkin

a bumpkin was beforehand with him in the possession of his misf---

Wood. If any one, beside yourself, sir, durst tell such a falsehood, it would cost a life.

Gov. Yes; and, if any one beside myself durst tell me such a truth, it would cost a soul perhaps.

[*Exit.*

Har. This is more unintelligible than all the rest.

L. Glen. To end these altercations;---upon yourself, Woodville, shall depend the fortune of this wretch, to whom you have been so gross a dupe as to justify the imputation of folly. Why, even without knowing me, she ridiculed your passion, and offered to leave you.

Wood. Impossible!

L. Glen. Dare you disbelieve me, sir?---nay, she shall be produced, and obliged to confess her arts;---then blush and obey! Here, Vane! Governor, the keys!

[*Exit.*

(*Woodville walks behind in great agitation.*

Har. Now could I find in my heart to make this story into a ballad, as a warning to all meddling puppies; and then hang myself, that it may conclude with a grace. Zounds, he must be endued with supernatural intelligence. Just when I was saying a thousand civil things to myself on my success, to have my mine sprung before my eyes by the enemy; and, instead of serving my friend and myself, become a meer tool to old Gravity's revenge! 'Pshaw! however, we must make the best of a bad matter.--- Woodville, what do'st mean to do, man?

Wood.

Wood. Let them produce my Cecilia!---I will then seize, and protect her to the last moment of my life.

Har. And I will assist you to the last moment of mine.

Wood. My generous cousin! this is indeed friendship.

Har. Not so very generous, if you knew all.

Re-enter Lord Glenmore and the Governor, with Bridget holding a handkerchief to her eyes, Vane following; Woodville flies and clasps her in his arms; Harcourt takes her hand.

Wood. My love! my life!---do I once again behold thee?---fear nothing!---you here are safe from all the world!---will you not bless me with one look?

Brid. (*looking at him and Harcourt with ridiculous distress*) Oh, dear me!

L. Glen. I have put it out of your power to marry, Sir, otherwise you may take her.

Wood. Take her!---what poor farce is this?

Har. Hey-day! more incomprehensibilities.

Van. (*Aside*) Now for the eclairecissement---since, if the Governor doesn't acknowledge her in his first rage and confusion, I may never be able to make him!---I humbly hope, Mr. Woodville will pardon me, if, with her own consent and my Lord's, I this morning married this young lady.

Gov. Zounds, you dog, what's that?---you married her?---why, how did you dare--and you

too, my Lord!---what the devil, did you consent to this?

Vane. Believe me, sir, I didn't then know she was your daughter.

L. Glen. Daughter!

Gov. So, it's out, after all:---it's a lye, you dog! you *did* know she was my daughter;---you all knew it;---you all conspired to torment me!

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Gov. Ha, ha, ha! confound your mirth!---as if I had not plagues enough already.---And you have great reason to grin too, my Lord, when you have thrown away my Gawky on your impudent valet.

L. Glen. Who could ever have dreamt of---ha, ha, ha---of finding *this* your little wonder of the country, brother?

Har. Nay, my Lord, she's the little wonder of the town, too.

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Gov. Mighty well,-----mighty well,----mighty well; pray, take your whole laugh out, good folks; since this is, positively, the last time of my entertaining you in this manner.---A cottage shall henceforth be her portion, and a rope mine.

Brid. I you *are* my papa, I think you might give some beter proof of your kindness;---but I shan't stir;---why, I married on purpose that I might not care for you.

Gov. Why, thou eternal torment!---my original sin!---whose first fault was the greatest frailty of woman; and whose second, her greatest folly! do'st thou,

thou, or the designing knave who has entrapped thee merely for that purpose, imagine my wealth shall ever reward incontinence and ingratitude?---no; go knit stockings to some regiment were he is preferred to be drummer!---warm yourself when the sun shines!---soak ev'ry hard-earned crust in your own tears, and repent at leisure.
[Exit in a rage.]

All. Ha, ha, ha!

L. Glen. He to ridicule my mode of education!----but what is the meaning of all this?

Wood. Truly, my Lord, I believe it would be very hard to find any for either my uncle's words or actions.----I am equally at a loss to guess as to Bridget here.

Vane. Hey, what? Bridget, did you say, sir? why you little ugly witch, are you really Bridget?

Brid. Why, I told ye so all along; but you wouldn't believe me.

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Brid. Oh dear heart!---I am now as much afraid of my new husband as father.

L. Glen. For thee, wench----

Brid. (pops upon her knees) Oh, no more locking up, for goodness sake, my Lord---I be sick enough of passing for a lady: but, if old Scratch ever puts such a trick again in my head, I hope---your Lordship will catch me! that's all.
[Exit.]

Vane. I shall run distracted! have I married an---and all for nothing too?

L. Glen. A punishment peculiarly just, as it results from abusing my confidence----Hence, wretch!

nor

nor ever, while you live, appear again in my presence. [*Exit Vane, looking furiously after Bridget.*

L. Glen. 'Tis time to return to ourselves. We shall soon come to an eclaireissement, Woodville!--- Since *you* won't marry, I will.

Wood. My Lord!

L. Glen. And you shall judge of my choice. [*Exit.*

Har. Now for it ;---whatever devil diverts himself among us to-day, I see he owes my sagacious Lord here a grudge, as well as the rest ; and I foresee that his wife and the Governor's daughter will prove equally entertaining.

Enter Lord Glenmore leading Cecilia, followed by Miss Mortimer.

L. Glen. This Lady, Sir, I have selected;---a worthy choice.

Wood. I dream, surely!---that lady your choice ?
---yours !

L. Glen. Ungrateful son ! had such been yours---

Wood. Why, this very Angel is mine, my Cecilia, my first, my only love.

L. Glen. How!---

Cec. Yes, my Lord!---you now know the unhappy object at once of your resentment, contempt, and admiration!---my own misfortunes I had learnt to bear, but those of Woodville overpower me!--- I deliver myself up to your justice ; content to be ev'ry way his victim, so I am not his ruin.

L. Glen. But to find you in this house---

Ecc.

Cec. Your generous nephew and the amiable Miss Mortimer distinguish'd me with the only asylum could shelter me from your son !

L. Glen. They distinguished *themselves* !----Oh, Woodville ! did I think an hour ago I could be more angry with you ?---How durst you warp a mind so noble ?

Wood. It is a crime my life cannot expiate,---yet, if the sincerest anguish---

L. Glen. I have one act of justice still in my power ; ---my prejudice in favour of birth, and even a stronger prejudice, is corrected by this lovely girl:---of her goodness of heart, and greatness of mind, I have had incontestible proofs, and, if I thought you, Frank---

Cec. Yet, stay, my Lord ! nor kill me with too much kindness.---Once your generosity might have made me happy, now only miserable.---My reason, my pride, nay even my love, induces me to refuse as the only way to prove I deserve him!---he has taught me to know the world too late, nor will I retort on him the contempt I have incurr'd.---Mr. Woodville will tell you whether I have not solemnly vow'd---

Wood. Not to accept me without the consent of both fathers ; and, if mine consents, what doubt---

Governor without.

Stop that old man ! stop that mad parson ! stop him !

Grey.

Grey without.

Nothing shall stop me in pursuit of my---(*enters*)
Ha! she is---she is here indeed! providence has at length directed me to her (*runs to Cecilia*)

Cec. My father! cover'd with shame let me sink before you.

L. Glen. and Har. Her father!

Enter Governor.

Grey. Rise, my glorious girl! rise purified and forgiven! rise to pity with me the weak minds that know not all thy value, and venerate the noble ones that do.

Gov. Hey! is it possible! Grey, is this my---

Gov. Yes, Sir; this is your Cecilia, my Cecilia, the object of your avowed rejection and contempt!

Gov. Rejection and contempt! stand out of the way---let me embrace my daughter---let me take her once more to my heart---(*runs and embraces her.*)

L. Glen. His daughter!

Gov. Yes, my friends, this is *really* my daughter---my own Cecilia, as sure as I am an old fool after being a young one, this good girl has a right to call me so by the name of father.---Hasn't she, Grey?--why my Lord, this is the very parson I told you of?---(*taking Cecilia's arm under his*) and now, young Sir, what do you say to your uncle's freaks?

Wood. Say, Sir? that had you ten thousand such I would go through a patriarchal servitude, in hopes of Cecilia's hand for my reward.

Gov. And, had I ten millions of money, and this only girl, thou should'st have her, and that, too, for thy noble freedom.---And what says my Cecilia to her father's first gift?

Cec. Astonishment and pleasure leave me hardly power to say, that a disobedience to you, sir, would only double my fault: nor to worship that Heav'n, which has led me through such a trial, to such a reward!---take all I have left myself to give you, Woodville, in my hand---(*Woodville kisses first her hand, and then herself.*)

Grey. Now, let me die, my darling child! since I have seen thee, once more, innocent and happy.

Gov. And now, kiss me, my Cecilia!---kiss me!---od, Miss Mortimer shall kiss me too, for loving my poor girl here!---kiss me, all of you, old and young! men, women and children!---od, I am so overjoyed, I dread the consequences.-----D'ye hear, there?----fetch me a surgeon and a bottle of wine!-----I must both empty and fill my veins on this occasion-----zooks I could find in my heart to frisk it merrily in defiance of the gout, and take that cursed vixen below, whoever she is, for my partner!

L. Glen. Methinks all seem rewarded, but my poor Sophia here? and her protection of Cecilia deserves the highest recompence: but whenever, my dear, you can present me the husband of your choice, I will present him with a fortune fit for my daughter.

Gov. Protect Cecilia! od! she is a good girl, and a charming girl, and I honour the very tip of her feathers now!---if she could but fancy our Charles,

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I'd throw in something pretty on his side, I promise you.

Miss Mor. Frankness is the fashion.---What would you say, sir, and you, my Lord, if I *had* fancied your Charles so much, as to make him mine already?

Gov. Hey-day! more discov'ries! how's this, boy?

Har. Even so, sir, indeed.

L. Glen. It completes my satisfaction.

Gov. Od, brother! who'd have thought you in the right all the while?---we'll never separate again, by the Lord Harry! but knock down our Welch friend's old house, and raise him one on the ruins, large enough to contain the whole family of us, where he shall reign sole sov'reign over all our future little Woodville's and Cecilians.

Cec. Oppressed with wonder, pleasure, gratitude, I must endeavour to forgive *myself*, when heav'n thus graciously proves its forgiveness, in allying me to ev'ry human being my heart distinguishes:

Grey. Yes, my Cecilia, you may believe him, who never gave you a bad lesson, that you are now most truly entitled to esteem; since it requires a far greater exertion to stop your course down the hill of vice, than to toil slowly up toward virtue.

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T H E E N D.

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